

T H E
Parliamentary Register;
O R
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
O F T H E
HOUSE OF COMMONS;

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF
The most interesting SPEECHES and MOTIONS; accurate
Copies of the most remarkable LETTERS and PAPERS;
of the most material EVIDENCE, PETITIONS, &c.
laid before and offered to the HOUSE,

DURING THE
FIRST SESSION of the FIFTEENTH PARLIAMENT
O F
G R E A T B R I T A I N.

Begun to be holden at Westminster on the 31st Day of
October, 1780.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N .

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THE
HISTORICAL
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
Of the FIRST SESSION of the
HOUSE of LORDS,
OF THE
Fifteenth Parliament of GREAT BRITAIN.

ON the 1st of November, 1780, the King went to the House of Lords, and opened this session with a speech from the throne, which the reader will find in the Commons' Debates of this session, page 25.

As soon as the King was gone, the Earl of *Westmoreland* moved, that an humble address be presented to his Majesty. The propriety of this address his Lordship supported in the following manner. The safe delivery of the Queen, and the birth of another Prince, events which increased the happiness of the Royal Family, and also its stability, could not but be pleasing to every Member of that House and subjects of joyful congratulation. Here he was confident there would not be a dissentient voice, he would not therefore trouble their Lordships with any recommendations of that part of the address. As to that part which expressed a sense of the happiness enjoyed under his Majesty's just and constitutional government, he observed that their Lordships could recollect more proofs of the affectionate and paternal regard ever shewn by his Majesty, since his accession to the throne, than he could. But one instance, one conspicuous proof and example of his Majesty's regard to the

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tion and liberties of this country, of which, young as he was, he had been a witness, and which was recent in all their memories, he could not pass by on this occasion; and that was his conduct on the occasion of the late riots; but for the interposition of him, in whose royal breast the preservation of the state is the first concern, our liberties might have been destroyed, and that constitution, on which they depend, subverted. When private houses were in flames; when the prisons were opened; when force and outrage were exercised against that and the other House of Parliament; when the Bank was attacked, and this metropolis in the most imminent hazard of being laid in ashes, then the King interposed the force, with which he had been entrusted by the former Parliament, for the salvation of this city; of our liberties, and of the state. In this, every king would not have observed his conduct---some would have seized the opportunity of turning the arms of an enraged populace against the civil constitution; and, uniting their arms with those of their military, have trampled upon the rights of the subjects. Such was the late conduct of a Northern Potentate, who had directed the fury of the people, and turned their power against the senate. His Majesty's conduct was, on the contrary, that of the father of his people, and bespoke the worthy descendant and heir of the House of Hanover. As a farther proof that the supplies granted by the last Parliament last year, had neither been misapplied nor useless, Lord Westmoreland observed, that, notwithstanding the powerful confederacy with which this nation is forced to contend, we had not in the course of this last year suffered any signal defeat; but, on the contrary, had gained several mighty advantages. A Spanish fleet, either sunk in the ocean, driven on the shore, or serving, as the greater part of it did, in the British navy! The combined fleet in the West-Indies, after all their boasted superiority of numbers, flying from our naval force, cautiously avoiding an engagement, and leaving us in the undisputed possession of the West-Indian seas. Our commerce was protected, our dominions undiminished, and Georgia and Carolina extended. In the Eastern empire of Britain, not a power to dispute our sovereignty in that quarter. Thus it appeared to his Lordship, that the conduct of government, during the year past, had not been unfortunate.

With regard to the continuance of the war for another year, the task was indeed arduous, but it was necessary. France and Spain had united their whole faculties for the support

port of the rebellion in North America, and with a view thereby to cut off our commerce, the source of our wealth and power. If we should lose North America, consider the danger that must arise from the new Commonwealth, to our West-India islands. These must soon fall into other hands than ours; and our commerce with the new world thus cut off, where shall we find shipping to support a navy that may secure to us our possessions in Asia? These two must, in that event, be severed from the mother country, and we must be confined within the limits of this island, which would only be ours, in case our hostile and powerful neighbours should not agree about dividing the spoil. In such a difficult and dangerous juncture, it was better to preserve, and expend the last shilling in our power, than submit to conditions of peace, which must put ourselves, and all that is dear to us, into the power of the enemy. Unanimity at home would yet make us respectable, and even something beyond it, abroad. For while it must be confessed that the part we have to act is arduous indeed, there are not wanting several topics of consolation and comfort. A firm, undivided, and compact power, has many advantages over such as are composed of different natives, having different views, opposite interests, and liable to be detached in the course of time and accidents from the common cause. It was a maxim of Rome never to make peace but with a conquered enemy. Lewis XIV. of France, was attacked with success by a combination of powerful and hostile neighbours. Many of his provinces were torn from him, and his kingdom was on the brink of ruin; yet he determined still to make war, and this invincible fortitude extricated him, as is universally known, from all his troubles. For he found means to break the alliance, and his kingdom was soon restored to its former power and lustre.

It is true, that the continuance of the war must be extremely expensive; but Britain had carried on as expensive wars, in causes of less importance to herself than the present. Witness the war of the Spanish succession, and that which was undertaken in defence of the House of Austria, and concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle. The credit of this nation is still good; whereas, that of our enemies, without exception, is nothing. Spain, with all its wealth, is forced to stamp by power a value on paper, which coercion sufficiently indicates its want of it. The shifts to which France is reduced, are of a similar nature. Paper has no currency in America. Its currency cannot be enforced by the power of Congress;

whereas the paper credit of Great Britain flies without compulsion throughout the whole world.

As a proof of the straits and wants of the revolted colonists in America, he took notice that they had for two or three years struggled to establish their paper credit, and to negotiate loans of money that might enable them to maintain armies of their own. But these attempts failing, they had recourse to an expedient which no nation ever adopted, and retained its freedom. They had taken the desperate resolution of inviting French troops into the country; a measure which prognosticated good things to this nation. Oh! but, said Lord Westmoreland, some will say, the more the Americans are driven to the necessity of contracting close alliances, and of mingling interests and adhering to France, the more certainly they will be lost to us. We will, however, continued his Lordship, be of a very different opinion, when we reflect, that the more closely they are connected, the more they are brought together and mingle their affairs, the more naturally will arise jealousies and quarrels. With regard to the merit or demerit of the present administration, his Lordship said that that was a relative or comparative idea.

We may account administration good, or tolerable, at least, if we know of none in whose hands public affairs would be safer, and who would fill their places better than they do. Men form a false estimate of men in power, by tacitly comparing them, not with the men of their own day, but with other men of other periods, who have blazed like meteors in a storm, and been fortunate enough, by bravely daring to meet success; but who, had the storm they ruled continued, might have met a different fate, and consequently have been differently represented by fame. He here affirmed, that to conduct the present was an infinitely greater task than to manage the last war: for in that we contended with America on our side against France, and now we struggle against both France, America, and Spain. As to Spain having joined France in the last war, France was at the last gasp; and Spain, near the end of the battle, came in action merely to receive her share of the disgrace.

All these things being considered (to which alone his Lordship confined himself, without enquiring into the rise of the American war, and the cause of its continuance) he thought it wiser to persevere in war, than to agree to conditions of peace dictated by our enemies, or to any truce, which would in fact be the same thing with a defeat. He therefore moved, that

that an humble address be presented to His Majesty, the substance of which was, a congratulation on the safe delivery of the Queen, and the birth of another Prince; an approbation of His Majesty's government, and of his intention to prosecute the war another year with firmness and vigour.

Lord *Brownlow*, thought it unnecessary to add any thing in support of a motion so ably recommended. The House would rejoice in the safe delivery of the Queen, and the birth of a Prince, events which would give the King so much satisfaction, and which would prove an encrease of that happiness which he so well deserved. He approved entirely of venturing even our last stake rather than tamely yield to the designs of our enemies, by cutting off our commerce, to reduce our power, and to bring us under their subjection. Wherefore, he seconded the motion that had been made by the noble Lord who spoke before him. Lord Brownlow

The Marquis of *Carmarthen* rose to speak, when the Duke of Devonshire, and one or two more Peers, coming into the House, a question arose whether they could be sworn at any hour past four o'clock; there being a law of Parliament, that all Peers should be sworn in between the hours of nine and four o'clock. Lord Denbigh, Lord Sandwich, Lord Abingdon, and the Duke of Richmond spoke to this point of order: the two latter noblemen contending for an adjournment, and the two former against it, but on different principles. In the mean time the standing order of the House was read, whence it appeared, that all Peers should be sworn in before four o'clock. Marq. of Carmarthen.

Lord *Mansfield* said, he did not know of any such order; but he had examined since this question of order arose, and had found an addition in the order, permitting the House, on any occasion that might in their judgements justify a departure from that rule, to do it. Though the order enjoined as a rule of business to administer the usual oaths to Peers before four o'clock, it did not hinder them to do the same thing, when there should be any necessity for doing so, after four o'clock, and they were judges of that necessity. There was nothing more then to do, than to put the question, whether this order should, in the present case, be dispensed with. This observation of Lord Mansfield satisfied the House; the question was put; the order was dispensed with; and the Peers were sworn in. Lord Mansfield

The Marquis of *Carmarthen* then rose up again, and said, that with regard to the first part of the address he presumed there Marq. of Carmarthen.

there would not be a dissentient voice. Placed, as he now was, at an humble distance from the throne, he still felt the sincerest satisfaction in every event which tended to encrease the felicity of the royal family. With regard to other matters contained in the proposed address, the noble Lord had entered into a wide field, and taken a very large and extensive scope. If ever there was a moment, the Marquis proceeded, when unanimity was requisite, and when it was necessary to lay aside the little prejudices, which we are all conscious, said he, of feeling in some degree, it is the present: and since the effects of unanimity and concord are confessedly so great, if the omission of a sentence, or any thing that can easily be omitted, may produce unanimity, I hope that it will be omitted.

His Lordship then said, that he approved the whole of the address, until the conclusion of that paragraph which assured His Majesty of the willingness and zeal of the House to concur in any measures that might be necessary for the support of His Majesty's government, and the preservation of their essential rights and interests; but all that part of the address which countenanced and encouraged the continuance of the war, the Marquis was for rejecting; and that rejection or the leaving it out of the address, he proposed as an amendment. He adverted to the powerful confederacy formed against us, to the suspicious intention of those that were called the neutral powers; to our being in want of all allies to support us under such a weight, and without any prospect of being delivered from the evils that surround us.

He could not speak from authority, but it was in every body's mouth, and the world believed it was true, that the counsels in the cabinet were fluctuating and various. There were different factions even amongst administration themselves. What one minister or counsellor was for, another was against; one council was adopted to-day, another to-morrow; one day the word was, push the war with vigour; the next, let us try what we can do by negotiation; let us try what we can do in Europe, or in America. One plan of operations is sent to America this month, and the next, before the former has been tried, another is sent quite different. On the whole, his Lordship expected not any good from the present war, or the present conductors of it; he, therefore, concluded with moving the amendment already specified.

Earl of Abingdon The Earl of Abingdon was against both the address and the amendment. Amendments were generally good for nothing; they

they only served to make the address the more palatable. He would speak his mind freely. The addition of another Prince to the royal family was no matter of joy to him, since there was no provision that he knew of for so numerous a royal progeny. Thirteen colonies were lost, which would have been a provision for thirteen children. He was for throwing out the address altogether. The associations were going forward; a new order of affairs would succeed, which would render such minutiae as addresses quite needless. He wished the people might obtain a new magna charta. It was in the reign of the good King John that the old one was obtained. He wished for a new declaration of the rights of the people. The present system of government, he said, was arbitrary. There was a system of despotism going on; for despotism, or arbitrary government, consisted in governing by will, not by law. The whole grievances of the people flowed from their not making a distinction between legislative and executive power, both of which powers they confound together, and call supreme; but the legislative power only is supreme. And why is it supreme? Because all laws are founded in nature; all laws that we are bound to obey; but laws that are arbitrary are enforced by violence, by art, which are the contrary of nature. If it be true that laws founded in nature are to be *propositiones contrariæ non possunt simul esse veræ*.

On a division of the House, the address was carried, contents, 68; not contents, 23

The Earl of *Aylsbury* moved, that an humble address be presented by the House to the Queen, congratulating her Majesty on her happy delivery, and on the birth of a Prince.

Earl of
Aylsbury

Lord *Southampton* said, that though he had scarcely passed the threshold of the House, he could not refrain from seconding a motion, which would give him an opportunity of carrying so joyful a message to the royal ears. This motion was agreed to unanimously.

Lord
South-
ampton.

November 2.

The Address presented.

The humble Address of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled.

Die Mercurii, 1 Novembris, 1780.

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg
leave

leave to return your Majesty our humble thanks for your most gracious speech from the throne.

Permit us to offer to your Majesty our most dutiful congratulations on the birth of another Prince, and the happy recovery of the Queen, and to assure your Majesty, that every addition to your Majesty's domestic happiness must always afford the highest satisfaction to your faithful subjects.

In the present arduous situation of public affairs, we think it an indispensable part of our duty to make those spirited and vigorous exertions which such a conjuncture demands; and we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that we are united in a firm resolution to decline no difficulty or hazard in the defence of our country, and for the preservation of our essential interests.

It is with just and heartfelt indignation that we see the monarchies of France and Spain leagued in confederacy to support the rebellion in your Majesty's colonies in North America, and employing the whole force of those kingdoms in the prosecution of a war waged in violation of all public faith, and for the sole purpose of gratifying boundless ambition, by destroying the commerce, and giving a fatal blow to the power of Great Britain.

We have seen with great satisfaction that the force which, with just confidence, was entrusted to your Majesty by Parliament, has, by the blessing of Divine Providence on the bravery of your fleets and armies, enabled your Majesty to withstand the formidable attempts of your enemies, and to frustrate the great expectations they had conceived; and we hope and trust that the success of your Majesty's arms in Georgia and Carolina, gained with so much honour to the conduct and courage of your Majesty's officers, and to the valour and intrepidity of your troops, will have the most important consequences, and that such signal events, followed by those vigorous measures which your Majesty recommends, and in which we are determined to concur, will disappoint all the views of our enemies, and restore the blessings of a safe and honourable peace.

We are satisfied that the only way to accomplish this great end, which your Majesty so earnestly desires, is to make such powerful and respectable preparations as shall convince our enemies that we will not submit to receive the law from any powers whatever, but, with that spirit and resolution which becomes us, will maintain the essential rights, honour, and dignity of Great Britain.

We

We have a deep and most grateful sense of the constant solicitude your Majesty shews to promote the true interests and happiness of all your subjects, and to preserve inviolate our excellent constitution in church and state. And we beg leave humbly to assure your Majesty, that it shall be our earnest endeavour to justify and deserve the confidence which your Majesty so graciously places in our affection, duty, and zeal.

Ordered that the said address be presented to his Majesty by the whole House.

His MAJESTY'S Answer.

My Lords,

I THANK you heartily for this very loyal and dutiful address.

The joy you express in the increase of my family, and in the happy recovery of the Queen, is extremely agreeable to me.

Your wise and spirited resolutions to prosecute the war with vigour, and to maintain, at every hazard, the essential interests, dignity, and honour of Great Britain, give me the highest satisfaction, and must be productive of the most salutary effects, both at home and abroad.

November 3.

The *Lord Chancellor* rose and said, a rumour had reached his ears of an insult having been offered, and a farther insult threatened to one of their Lordships; that the whole of the report was so uniformly consonant, that although it was impossible for the House to take up the matter in its present stage, or for him to suggest to their Lordships what would be the proceedings which might possibly be necessary, when the whole fact, and all its relative circumstances, were formally and correctly before the House, yet he had thought it peculiarly incumbent on him to rise, not to inform, but to remind, their Lordships, that such a rumour had prevailed, and to state to their Lordships, with all due submission, that it was their duty to take some step in relation to the rumour, which to their wisdom should seem most likely to rescue the House from so great an indignity as it would unavoidably sustain, if an insult was permitted to be offered to the person of any one Peer. He had only to add, that if, by accident, any of the noble Lords present were perfectly in possession of certain facts stated in the rumour, or of any letters tending to shew what those facts were, it would be an act of duty, on their parts, and of obligation to the House, to communicate the same to their Lordships.

Lord
Chancel-
lor.

Earl of *Jersey* rose, and said, a correspondence tending to

the most serious consequences had taken place between two noble Peers of that House, which unless immediate steps were taken, might be fatal to one or both of the parties. His Lordship was then called upon for their names; he replied, "the Duke of Grafton and Lord Pomfret;" and his Lordship moved, that those two Peers be summoned to attend in their places on some future day.

Lord Chancellor. The *Lord Chancellor* rose again, and acquainted the House, that he believed the first step to be taken, and the most agreeable to order, was to direct the two right honourable members to attend in their places on a certain day.

The Lord Chancellor then put the motion,

That his Grace the Duke of Grafton and the Earl of Pomfret do attend this House in their places next Monday, the 6th.

November 6.

The order of Friday, for the attendance of the Duke of Grafton and Lord Pomfret was read.

Lord Chancellor. The *Lord Chancellor* then observed, that a noble Earl (Jersey) had stated in his place on Friday, though previous to such notice there were strong and probable rumours to the same purport, that a noble Duke and a noble Earl, members of that House, had had a correspondence which, from its complexion and tendency, was likely to be productive of very fatal consequences. Upon this information the order now read was made by the House, and as he perceived that in compliance with that order both the Lords were in their places, he meant the Duke of Grafton and the Earl of Pomfret; and as it was impossible for the House to proceed farther in the business without being informed of the circumstances alluded to, it was expected that the noble Lords, or either of them, would state to the House, as members, how far they were respectively concerned.

Duke of Grafton. The Duke of *Grafton* then rose, and begged leave to inform their Lordships, that he was there in his place in consequence of their Lordships' order; that he thought it his duty to obey the orders of the House at all times, and upon all occasions, for which reason, with the permission of the House, he should proceed to give a faithful account of what passed, as far as came within his knowledge. He should avoid detail as much as possible, and omit every circumstance which was not supported by facts.

He should just observe, that the noble Earl near him and he had never any disagreement whatever, that he always entertained

tertained an high respect and esteem for his Lordship; and that of course, what had recently happened seemed to him the more unaccountable.

To his utter astonishment, on Sunday fortnight, the 22d ult. early in the morning, at his seat of Euston Hall in Suffolk, he received the following letter, which he begged to be indulged so far as that the clerk might read it. He said, it was a letter signed Pomfret; and it having been offered, Lord Pomfret acknowledged it to be his hand-writing. He said the letter was delivered to him as coming from the noble Earl, who, he understood from the bearer, was waiting for an answer at the inn at the Park Gate.

The letter was then handed to the clerk, and read by him. It imported, that his Lordship was waiting for him with a case of pistols and a sword, and demanded satisfaction; the cause of which demand was, that the noble Duke to whom the letter was directed, had provided for and protected a servant of his, one Langstaff, lately discharged; and concluded with positively demanding immediate satisfaction.

His Grace, as soon as the letter was read, professed he never was so astonished in his life. He had never till that instant so much as heard of Langstaff's name, and had continued always to live upon the most friendly terms with the noble Earl, from their earliest acquaintance; and he could affirm, as the great God was his judge, he neither directly nor indirectly had any hand in providing for Langstaff.

Surprised at the extraordinary tenor of the letter, but conscious of his own innocence, he immediately wrote the noble Lord an answer. The answer was read, and was to the following purport: That he knew nothing whatever of the supposed ground of offence; professed his high esteem for his Lordship; begged that the noble Earl would either on receipt come to Euston, or when a friend of his, who was then at church, should return, he would send him to wait on the noble Lord to explain the matter to him, and convince him that there was not the most distant colour for the displeasure he had conceived against him.

In what he had done hitherto his Grace said he had consulted no one, but as soon as his friend returned, he imparted the whole matter to him, and they both went to the inn to enquire for the noble Lord; but when they came there, could get no account of any such person. He had himself perceived a chaise at a distance, and went to the place where he had seen it, and inquiring at a cottage near which the chaise stood,

was informed that, as soon as the servant went back to the chaise, orders were given to the driver to turn the horses the other way, and it instantly drove off.

In the evening of the same day he received a letter dated from Barton Mills, five o'clock, which was likewise handed to, and read by the clerk. This letter, after passing some handsome compliments on the noble Duke's public conduct, and professing himself perfectly satisfied with his Grace's conduct, proceeded to state the grounds of his suspicion, and of course his motives for writing the letter delivered in the morning. It observed that Langstaff had been his game-keeper, and that he had discharged him; that Langstaff vowed vengeance on his being dismissed from his service; that he had lately caused him to be apprehended, and brought before two magistrates on suspicion, and that one Smyth, his Grace's huntsman, had interested himself in Langstaff's behalf before the magistrates, saying that Langstaff was under his Grace's protection, who had lately provided for him in the excise; and that in consequence of his Grace's name, and the influence annexed to it, Langstaff had been set at liberty. His causes of complaint against Langstaff were then stated; and he concluded his letter by testifying his perfect satisfaction, provided the noble Duke would insist that Smyth should disavow having any authority from his Grace for making use of his name.

This letter being read, his Grace said, by the time it reached him, his huntsman had come from Whittlebury forest, in Northamptonshire, and informed him, that Mr. Smyth was to set off on Monday, the next day, with the dogs and hunters for Euston. This being a distance of ninety miles, he concluded, that Mr. Smyth would not reach Euston till Wednesday evening; he did not therefore lose a minute's time, but instantly wrote a note, and dispatched a servant with it to Barton-Mills, where, he presumed, the noble Earl might have rested for the evening, desiring the servant however to bring back the note if he should not find Lord Pomfret there. The servant accordingly did so, and learnt, that the horses which drew the carriage were Barton-Mills horses, but that the noble Lord had gone back to the last post. In this note he stated the circumstance of his expecting Mr. Smyth at Euston the ensuing Wednesday, and of his taking the earliest opportunity, after Mr. Smyth's arrival, of causing him to write a letter to the noble Earl, containing a true state of the transaction, and of course informing his Lordship that he

he knew nothing at all of Langstaff, and if any one had made use of his name in the affair, it was totally without any authority from him.

So the matter rested. His Grace said, that on this note being returned to him by the servant he sent with it to Barton-Mills, he transmitted it; by the general post, to his Lordship, at Euston, near Northampton.

On the arrival of Mr. Smyth at Euston, he imparted to him what had passed, and Mr. Smyth immediately wrote to his Lordship, denying every thing respecting Langstaff, of which his Lordship had been informed, so far as the same respected his Grace.

He remained at Euston till Wednesday last, and arrived in town on Friday, when, about five o'clock in the afternoon, he received a third letter from the noble Earl.

This letter was likewise read by the Clerk, and after declaring that his resentments had returned, charged his Grace, in the souleſt and moſt unbecoming language, with cowardice; gave no credit to his repeated assertions; and accused him with acting hatefully, and, if our memory serves us right, with being a f——l.

After the several letters were read, his Grace expressed himself in very moderate terms, and with a candour and generosity that did him great honour.

As soon as his Grace sat down, the Earl of *Pomfret* rose. Earl of His Lordship opposed strongly the reading of the last letter, *Pomfret*, but was called three or four times to order by the Chancellor. His general defence, though consisting of a great variety of particulars, may be thus shortly comprised:—That he had a game keeper, one Langstaff, who being disappointed of being made his steward, conceived the worst intentions against himself, family, and house, denouncing destruction against them all: that before he quitted his service, he endeavoured to carry some of his threats into execution, particularly against one of his sons, whom he endeavoured to allure to the stables, and knock on the head with some deadly weapon, under pretence that the horse or horses had kicked him. That before he left his service, he had frequently and loudly denounced those threats: that he had a fine colt ripped open, and his entrails let out, by this man: that he had him apprehended, upon suspicion of the felony, and let him go, on condition that he would keep out of Towcester and its neighbourhood: that he was induced to take this step, merely on the account of the safety of his own person, his wife, and chil-

dren, all of whom, he feared, would fall by the hands of this assassin, and his house and furniture be destroyed by fire.

That, for the benefit of the air, he and his family removed to a place near town, for which he was indebted to his Majesty's goodness, where he remained till he returned to his seat in Northamptonshire on the 12th of October, where he confessed he was equally filled with alarm and indignation; on being informed that Langstaff was returned in the capacity of an assistant to the officer of excise for the district of Worcester. His fears and apprehensions again returned for his wife, children, and property, and they soon appeared to be well founded, for he had a fine colt lamed by the malicious means employed by Langstaff, who prevailed on the farrier, who shod him, to drive two nails up the quick or frog of two of his feet, so as to render him quite useless.

On this ground he had the villain taken up on suspicion, and brought before two justices, but through the interference of Smyth, the noble Duke's huntsman, who made use of the noble Duke's name, the fellow was let to go at large. Under such a distress of mind, in continual fear for his wife and children, for himself and his property, and finding no redress nor prospect of redress, so long as the fellow continued to be thus so powerfully supported, he was led to take the steps he did, and though now he was ready to give his honour to take no further notice of what had happened, so far as the same respected the noble Duke, he looked upon it that he had no right to pry any great degree of credit to what had passed, nor could he say but he had strong motives of resentment, which had only been suspended, not subsided, when, instead of a satisfactory declaration from the noble Duke, he referred him to a written explanation to be given by his huntsman. He received the letter alluded to by the noble Duke from Smyth, which he would read; but taking all the circumstances, and considering them together, he had no right to be pleased, and he was now enabled to see to the bottom of the whole, and see clearly where the matter originated. Smyth was his Grace's huntsman, and in his intimacy he procured the place for Langstaff, and rode about the country with him, giving him his countenance, and reporting that he was protected by the noble Duke. Mr. Stonehewer was the person who procured him the place, and the matter was every way clear in itself.

His Lordship here read Mr. Smyth's explanatory letter, dated Euston, in part, "and after he had proceeded, handed it

to the clerk, observing, that it was such an heap of nonsense and ignorance that he could not bear to read it.

The letter stated that several persons in the neighbourhood had applied to him, Smyth, to endeavour to procure for Langstaff a place in the excise; that in consequence of this application he recommended him to Mr. Stonehewer, one of the commissioners of excise, who sent down an order to have him instructed preparatory to his appointment; in consequence of which the excise officer of Towcester, it being the next place to his residence, had orders to instruct him; that as to the apprehensions of Langstaff's remaining there, they were totally unfounded, for having wrote to the supervisor of excise, he assured him that it was a rule never to appoint a man to a district where he was instructed, nor in the county where he was born; and as to what passed before the justices on the apprehension of Langstaff, he was discharged merely because an affidavit was made by a person that the night his Lordship's colt was so cruelly treated, Langstaff slept in his house.

This letter being read, his Lordship reiterated several of his former arguments, pleaded his well-founded apprehensions of the diabolical intentions of Langstaff against his family, spoke much of his weakness, and the means that had been made use of to prejudice the public against him, and submitted to their Lordships, whether, under such a load of obloquy, oppression, provocation, and ill-treatment, he had not great cause of resentment. His Lordship by no means seemed to be reconciled, at least with Mr. Smyth and some others; and though he seemed willing to decline persisting in his former resentments against the noble Duke, he was far from acknowledging the steps he had taken against his Grace had no just foundation.

As soon as his Lordship sat down, the Lord Chancellor suggested the propriety of having one or both the noble Lords withdraw, according as the House might think proper to determine. The only leading precedent on the journals, both the noble Lords withdrew, previous to the consideration of the business; but that precedent was not exactly in point, as the noble Lords ordered to withdraw were both culpable, whereas on the present occasion no complaint, either direct or implied, was imputed to the noble Duke. He wished, however, for the direction of the House.

A pause ensued, and his Lordship observed, as nothing specific was said, he was to presume it was the sense of the House that both Lords should withdraw. He then moved it, and it was ordered.

Lord
Chancellor.

Another

Another question arose, whether they should withdraw into separate rooms.

After a short interruption, Lord Pomfret wished that they might withdraw into the same room. He pledged his honour, if their Lordships did permit it, nothing should happen in consequence of it.

It was at length agreed that their Lordships should retire into separate rooms.

Lord Camden. As soon as the noble Lords withdrew, Lord Camden rose, and said he should just throw out a few hints to the House for their Lordships' consideration; and if what he might offer should meet the sense of the House, or the House should go along with him, he would move a question on it, otherwise he meant not to offer any thing as independently coming from himself.

The first object as a general one to be considered was, whether the noble Earl who had sent the challenge (for as to criminality in the noble Duke it was totally out of the question) should be considered as a criminal; and if so, what kind of punishment he was liable to undergo? If his Lordship should be deemed a criminal, it would be necessary to have recourse to precedents. The only precedents which recurred to his memory, were those of Lords Middlesex and Bridgewater in the reign of Charles the Second; and of Lords Granville and Keith in the reign of King William. Here his Lordship gave a narrative of the whole proceedings in respect of the former, and moved that the Journal might be read, which was done accordingly.*

The

* A nobleman having enticed away, with a purpose of marrying, a daughter of the Earl of Bridgewater, that nobleman wrote a letter to Sir Chichester Wrey, containing some suspicions that the Earl of Middlesex was privy to his daughter's elopement, or was assisting in it, upon which Lord Middlesex sent Lord Bridgewater a challenge. This circumstance coming to the King's knowledge, he interposed, and endeavoured to reconcile them. This interposition not having the desired effect, his Majesty proposed to their Lordships, that four noble Lords, two on each side, should be acquainted with the circumstances; and that they should abide by what the Lords (arbitrators) agreed. A report was made, but Lord Middlesex refused to acquiesce. Two more Lords were added on each side, but they were equally unsuccessful in obtaining the desired object, fresh obstacles having been thrown in the way by Lord Middlesex.

The

The first entry on the Journal was the 8th of June, 1663, the 15th of Charles II. when, upon a letter wrote by Lord Bridgewater to Sir Chichester Wrey, it appeared that Lord Middlesex sent Lord Bridgewater a challenge, of which the latter accepted; that the King took the business upon himself, and appointed first two, and then four, noble Lords on each side to settle the matter, but the parties were implacable, and refused to abide by their determination, that afterwards he referred it to a commission in the office of the Earl Marshal, whose determination met with the fate of that made by the Lords Arbitrators; and finally, that the King sent a special message by the Lord Privy Seal to that House, to take up the matter itself. Each day's proceedings in the House were read; and after the matter undergoing several discussions, namely, on the 8th, 12th, and 25th of June, and 2d of July, in the early stages of which the Earl of Middlesex was sent

The King, however, to leave no means untried, issued an order to constitute a Commission in the office of the Earl Marshal of England, as a court of honour, entitled to have cognizance of such matters. The court, in compliance with his Majesty's orders, proceeded to enquire, and heard proofs; but there being no obligation on the parties to obey the determination come to in the committee thus constituted, both the noble Lords declined to abide by it.

This incensed his Majesty greatly, who sent a message by the Lord Privy Seal to the House, desiring that their Lordships might interpose their authority, expressing at the same time how much he was displeased with the conduct of the two noble Lords.

We should have taken notice, that during these several proceedings, Lords Middlesex and Bridgewater were in custody; for as soon as the King had the first intimation of the quarrel, he gave directions that their Lordships should be put under arrest, where they still remained.

When the Privy Seal therefore delivered the message relative to the business, the House immediately ordered that the noble Lords should be taken into the custody of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod. This being complied with, the House proceeded to take the matter into consideration; and after long debate, a motion was made, and question put, which was resolved in the affirmative, that Lords Middlesex and Bridgewater, the one for sending, and the other for receiving, a challenge, had acted highly in contempt of the respect due to that House. After which another motion was made, that for their said contempt the Earl of Middlesex be committed to the Tower, and the said Earl of Bridgewater to the custody of the Black Rod.—The two noble Lords were called to the bar, and informed by the Speaker of the order of the House.

sent to the Tower, and Lord Bridgewater committed to the custody of Black Rod; the event of the whole was, that they were both ordered to come to the bar, and make satisfaction to the House, and be there reprehended by the Speaker; and after they came to their respective places, to rise and be reconciled, the offender, or challenger, confessing his offence, and asking pardon of the other noble Lord.

The other precedents of Lords Granville and Keith were likewise read, with all their circumstances, as stated in the Journals of the year 1690.

Lord Camden. This being finished, Lord Camden rose again, and wished, as he said, to feel the sense of the House respecting what it might be proper to do; but here a silence of several minutes ensued, upon which he said he must decline going further,

A committee was appointed to consider of the proper mode of proceeding, who, on the 11th of June, reported, by the mouth of their chairman, Lord Ashley, afterwards Earl of Shaftsbury, which report underwent several alterations. A motion was made, that said report, thus altered, be now received, which, after long debate, passed in the negative.

On the 25th the report was taken off the table, and the mode of future proceeding discussed. The business was further adjourned to the 27th, when the following mode of conducting the business was finally determined upon.

That on a certain day (July the 2d) the two noble Lords should come to the bar, and on their knees crave pardon of his Majesty and the House, whose government and dignity they had insulted. After which the Speaker was to reprehend them severally for the high offence they had committed.

After this they were to be admitted into the House, and after they came to their places, they were again to apologize to the House, and the Lord who sent the challenge, to ask the noble Lord's pardon to whom he sent it, and both the noble Lords to be reconciled.

On the 2d of July, 1663, those formalities, which had been previously settled, were complied with, and here the affair ended.

The difference between Lord Granville and Lord Keith was not so minutely attended to. A challenge passed between the noble Lords, in which Colonel Granville, afterwards the celebrated Lord Lansdown, was to be second to Lord Granville, and Colonel Trig to Lord Keith. Notice was given to the House, and the two Lords ordered to attend in their places. Lord Granville paid obedience to the order; but Lord Keith refused, till at length an order was given to break doors.

The two Lords were then brought to the bar, reprimanded, and afterwards reconciled in the House.

unless he should previously understand it to be the sense of the House.

Another pause ensued; at length the *Chancellor* rose, and made a very able speech; stated the precedents, and said their Lordships had a choice to adopt one or the other, or to strike out a new one. The tenor of his speech rather tended to a recommendation of some exemplary proceeding.

Lord
Chancel-
lor.

The Marquis of *Rockingham* said a few words; the case was a new one; that neither of the precedents exactly came up to it; and threw out some hints of insanity, and the danger of permitting the noble Earl, in his present state of mind, from going at large.

Marq. of
Rocking-
ham.

Lord *Camden*, when he rose the second time, said, that the noble Earl, though he had given his word of honour not to take any farther step, did not appear to be convinced that he had acted without provocation.

Lord
Camden.

The Marquis of *Carmarthen* pointed out the necessity of the House declaring the act committed by the noble Lord to have been criminal, and consequently deserving of punishment; he therefore moved that the noble Lord acted in contempt of that House.

Marq. of
Carmar-
then.

This being agreed to, he moved next that the noble Lord be committed to the Tower, which was agreed to.

Agreeably to precedent, Lord Pomfret was ordered to the bar, and informed by the Lord Chancellor that it was their Lordships' pleasure that he be committed to the Tower.

As soon as Lord Pomfret retired, in custody of Black Rod, the Marquis of *Carmarthen* moved, that the Duke of Grafton had acted with respect to the House, and perfectly conformable to the principles of a man of honour; which was agreed to.

Marq. of
Carmar-
then.

A warrant of commitment was then made in the name of the House, and signed by the Chancellor, directed to the Lieutenant of the Tower of London, to receive and keep in custody the body of the Earl of Pomfret, till delivered by due course of law.

No business till

November 15.

The Earl of Pomfret having presented a petition, the order of the day was read for taking the same into consideration. The petition was read.

"The humble petition of the right honourable George Fermor, Earl of Pomfret,

D 2

"Humbly

"Humbly sheweth,

"That your petitioner hath, ever since he fell into the displeasure of this honourable House been highly afflicted, that he should upon any account whatsoever deserve to be separated from that House, of which he hath the honour to be a Member.

"That your petitioner doth in all humility acknowledge his offences, and your justice in all that you have ordered concerning him.

"May it therefore please your Lordships to take into your most honourable considerations, the deep sense your petitioner hath, that he hath justly deserved the displeasure of your Lordships, and doth most humbly implore the grace and favour of this honourable House, in pardoning his offences, and restoring him to their good opinion, and the effects of it.

And your petitioner, &c.

POMFRET."

Lord
Osborne.

Lord *Osborne*, Marquis of Carmarthen, then rose up, and acquainted their Lordships, that the House were in possession of all the facts relative to the melancholy event respecting the noble Earl, and of his commitment.

That he had searched the Journals for precedents, in order to inform himself what steps were proper for the House next to take in consequence of so high a contempt, and therefore with submission he should first move,

1st, That the right honourable George Fermor, Earl of Pomfret, do have the reprehension of this House, for his offence committed against this House, given at the bar standing.

2dly, That the Earl of Pomfret do make his humble submission to this House standing in his place.

3dly, That the Earl of Pomfret do engage upon his honour not to prosecute farther any measures of violence or resentment against any persons who may have been the objects thereof.

These several questions were put to the House by the Lord Chancellor, and agreed to *nem. dissen.*

November 16.

Marq. of
Carmar-
then.

The Marquis of *Carmarthen*, as chairman of the committee of privileges, to whom the consideration of the Earl of Pomfret's petition was referred, rose and read the report of said committee. It was afterwards read by the clerk at the table, and agreed to without any amendment by the House.

It

It was in substance as follows: that the Earl of Pomfret be brought up to the bar, as the next day, in the custody of the Lieutenant of the Tower; that, standing at the bar, he be acquainted with the proceedings had in his Lordship's absence, and be reprimanded, in terms expressive of the sense the House conceive of the breach of privilege he had been guilty of, and the high insult given to the dignity of that House by his Lordship, in sending letters to his Grace the Duke of Grafton, containing a challenge to fight, and couched in terms of abuse and personal reproach, unfit to be sent to any right honourable member of that House. To likewise acquaint the noble Earl, that their Lordships had remitted the punishment, justly due to so high an offence, aggravated as it was by all the circumstances which accompanied it on account of the humble petition presented to the House by his Lordship, containing an acknowledgement of his said offence, and expressing a sorrow for his having done any thing which could have brought upon him the displeasure of their Lordships. The report further stated, that it would be expected, that the noble Earl should acknowledge, that the resentments conceived by him against the noble Duke, had been founded in the mistaken apprehension of an affront, which he was convinced the noble Duke did not offer; and finally declare, upon his honour, that all his former resentments and suspicions were at an end; and that they should cease, as well in respect of the noble Duke against whom they appeared to be chiefly directed, as the several other persons who had been objects of them.

The other order of the day was then read for the House to be summoned, on a motion of the Duke of Bolton, on which his Grace rose, and entered into a kind of abstract state of the nation. His Grace observed, that in this critical and very unusual situation of the country, when the landed interest was oppressed beyond all example, from the nation's being engaged in a war of so ruinous and expensive a nature, that although every year's continuance of that war inevitably added to the enormous burthen of our public debt, including the money spent, whether raised within the year, or borrowed at an exorbitant interest, at the rate of nearly twenty millions per annum, to compare what was performed in return this wasteful profusion of treasure; to oppose the advantages to the disadvantages, and by striking a balance, learn whether the nation had been a loser or gainer. This, he believed, could not be so well decided upon in any other way.

Duke of
Bolton.

as by having reference to the event of the last year, he would not say disgraceful, but most certainly inactive and inglorious. campaign, there was no prospect of a fortunate issue of that war, nor indeed of any issue. It would not perhaps be thought presumptuous for an individual, insignificant as he was, to call their Lordships' attention to the present most alarming state of affairs in general. The language of the times was, his Grace said, like the times themselves, altogether extraordinary and new. In former wars, when this country was ever so hard pressed by her enemies, the speeches from the throne, and the speeches of ministers, held out to the people *something of comfort, some hopes* of a better turn of fortune. At present neither the speeches of His Majesty, nor the speeches of his servants, afforded any thing that amounted to express a satisfactory feeling, as to our future prospects—on the contrary, all was dismay, and nothing was heard from any quarter but the tremendousness of the confederacy against us, and the great power and mighty preparations of the family alliance, the alliance of the House of Bourbon! Of the alliance he had at different times heard very different language. The late Earl of Chatham, he remembered, used to warn the House of that alliance. Others had said, it was an alliance to be laughed at. Without adopting either opinion, he begged leave to ask what had ministers to shew, or what argument could they urge to prove, that their country was in a better state now, than it had been in the last year? He knew not where to turn his eyes in order to find that our situation was improved. In America, what had we done? lost Rhode Island, the only good winter harbour on that side the Atlantic, which was now by well-planned additional works rendered so strong, as to render any attack or expectation of recovering it totally improbable, and too absurd to be entertained even in idea; which, while it answered the double purposes of keeping Sir Henry Clinton in check, and thereby straitening him in his quarters, rendered the communications between New-York and Europe, to the southward and the West-Indies, totally insecure and hazardous, at the best very precarious. But what had our army done? lost a good man, and sent a gallant officer to be hanged, and in return received a very bad man in exchange, whose services or fidelity could not with safety be relied on. Ministers had boasted, in their speech from the throne, of the victorious feats of Lord Cornwallis, and of our success in Georgia and the Carolinas—he saw no such great cause for exultation on that account, though
our

our officers had undoubtedly behaved well. He was convinced, that the state of New York, and its vicinities, hemmed in on all sides, as the commander in chief was, more than counterbalanced any advantages obtained in the Carolinas. In the West-Indies, our situation was surely much worse than it had been last year. . By sending Admiral Rodney to touch at Gibraltar with his four ships instead of sending him directly to the West-Indies, a good opportunity had been lost, and the French had time given them to put their islands into a better condition than they were in the last year; though during the greater part of the last campaign we were masters of the West-Indian seas, yet nothing had been effected. In Europe we had but one ally, and by our own mismanagement we had contrived to lose that ally. He alluded to Portugal, and meant to describe her as the only ally that had shewn any desire to serve us; and how had we lost her? by most unwarrantably presuming to make the port of Lisbon a neutral port, a station and a place for fitting out ships; nay, a kind of naval arsenal, a matter unheard of before, and contrary to the law of nations! By such conduct it was, that we had now no port in Europe but England, and were confined to our island. At the same time we had added to the neutral powers in confederacy, and by that means strengthened the hands of our enemies, for certainly the neutral powers having armed in confederacy was an advantage on the side of our enemies, and a great disadvantage on our side; as we had thereby, in a great degree, been deprived, and, he feared, if the armed neutrality should be finally agreed upon, totally deprived ourselves of all the natural and acquired advantages hitherto derived from our situation between the northern and southern powers of Europe, and our acknowledged dominion in the narrow seas: because all the supplies, at least much the greater part, necessary to the fitting out and maintaining the French and Spanish navy, would be obliged to pass eight months of the year through our channel; but if the objects of the armed neutrality should be obtained, neither our natural situation nor ancient claims would or could avail; for, he presumed, the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty was not prepared to say, that he was ready to wage war with all Europe. His Grace begged their Lordships to consider these things, and to look also at the ruined trade of the country. There it was he meant to lay his finger, and on that he should hinge the proposal he designed to offer to their
Lord

Lordships, for the reception and consideration of which, he had taken the liberty to move that they might be summoned. The trade of Great Britain had suffered beyond all history in the course of the last summer. On the 9th of August no less than fifty-two ships captured at once, and among them five East Indiamen, and many richly laden for the West Indies! Let their Lordships consider the importance of that loss—let them recollect, that it might cost this country twenty millions of money; because, from the nature of the stores, the usefulness of the articles with which that fleet was freighted, and the great value of the whole capture, France and Spain might be enabled to continue the war another year, and God knew how much longer. That fleet had, contrary to wisdom, contrary to every necessary caution, been suffered to touch at Madeira, when it was well known that the combined fleets of the House of Bourbon were stationed at Cadiz, and waiting to make the best of any opportunity that might offer of enriching themselves at our expence. This circumstance it was that he meant particularly to call their Lordships' attention to, and to institute an enquiry, that the House might know to whom it was imputable, that this fleet sailed under so slight a convoy, and who it was that directed the Commodore to come in so close with Cape St. Vincent; and why, at a period of such imminent danger, that fleet sailed in the track for Madeira, or if it was indispensibly necessary that the fleet should touch at Madeira, why it was not convoyed across by the western Squadron all the latitudes till it passed Cape St. Vincent? It therefore appeared to him, on the whole consideration of the state of naval operations, as well offensive as defensive, as well to protect our own property, as to annoy our enemies, that our grand fleet, then in the bay, under the command of Admiral Geary, could not have rendered any service to its country, so great or acceptable, as that of conveying our fleet out of the probable track of a formidable enemy, from whom, in the extent of the ocean they were spread over, it was impossible to escape, under the presumed directions the commodore acted; for most clearly, if Captain Moutray did not act under specific instructions, respecting the course marked out for him, he had been much to blame.—He believed that Captain Moutray had acted under specific instructions, and that was the principal object of his present motion.—His Grace observed, that it had been customary, in the case of public disasters, such as he had been alluding to, to propose enquiries into the causes which operated

ed, in producing a calamity of this alarming, extensive, and be feared fatal, nature, and thereby learn, whether any blame was due to those who had *given*, or *executed* the orders, concerning the same.—He trusted the House *felt* the propriety, justice, and necessity of instituting such an enquiry.—He was himself perfectly persuaded of it, and under that persuasion, begged leave to submit to their Lordships, the following motion, and that merely, as blame was imputable somewhere, that their Lordships and the nation might know who it was, or was not, that ought to stand responsible to Parliament and people, for the loss of one of the most valuable outward-bound trade fleets that ever sailed from the harbours of England, considered merely in respect of property; but when the nature of the property was taken into the account, that it contained naval and other stores designed for the use and protection of our West-India islands, our squadrons in that quarter of the globe, and our other distant dependencies; that it weakened our marine and land operations, or had rather totally suspended them till replaced, and that this invaluable property had fallen into the hands of an enemy, to be employed against us, the magnitude of the loss was such as to exceed his powers of computation.—His Grace concluded a short, but spirited and well conceived speech, with moving:

“That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased to give directions that there may be laid before this House copies of the orders and instructions given to Captain John Moutray, of his Majesty’s ship *Ramillies*, in July or August last, respecting his taking under his command a number of merchant ships bound to the East and West-Indies, and other parts, so far as relates to Captain Moutray’s being directed to go to the island of *Madeira*; or respecting his being particularly cautioned to use his utmost endeavours to avoid sailing in such a tract as might risque his falling in with the enemy’s fleet.”

And also, “A copy of Captain Moutray’s letter to the board of Admiralty, giving an account of the capture of a great part of the merchant ships under his care, on the 9th of August last.”

The Earl of *Sandwich*, in reply, rose, and said, so far Earl of
 was he from having the smallest objection to the present mo- Sandwich.
 tion, that he begged leave to second it. He thought the House and the public were entitled to have the fullest satisfaction, respecting the loss of so very important and valuable a fleet as that to which the noble Duke had alluded, and

therefore in order to throw the greater light upon that affair, he would, with the leave of the House, move an addition to the noble Duke's motion, and call for a paper which in his opinion, would assist materially in convincing their Lordships, that it had not been owing to any neglect of his, that so fatal an accident had happened; on the contrary, previous to the fleets' sailing, orders had been sent out to Admiral Geary, to give them every protection the exigencies of the service might admit of, and in the performance of that duty; to risque a battle with the enemy, however superior; that every information Ministers received, Captain Moutray was in possession of; and as to sending out a stronger convoy, merely for the purpose of protecting the trade fleet, it would have been extremely wrong, for either it should be such a force as was able to cope with Don Cordova, or the noble Duke must confess, that sending out a smaller force, in the case it should be met by the enemy, would be only devoting it. When the news of the accident arrived, he did assure their Lordships, no man in the kingdom felt greater sorrow than he did, neither was any man more conscious of the value of the fleet captured, and of its great importance under every consideration; as a proof of this, more than ordinary care was taken to guard against an accident, which it was not, as it afterwards appeared, in human wisdom to prevent. The noble Duke had said, that a short time previous to the fleet's sailing from England, it was known that the combined fleets were at Cadiz, and that they meant soon to sail from that port; this was very true, and in consequence of that knowledge, Admiral Geary had been sent out with all the ships, that were ready at the time, with express instructions suited to the occasion. After he had sailed a sufficient time, to render it most probable that the great fleets of merchantmen for the East and West-Indies might sail with the utmost safety, those fleets were suffered to sail; and surely if ever there was a moment when it was most wise and prudent to trust a valuable fleet of merchantmen to sea, it was when the great fleet of England was out, and out with the express order to clear the passage. Nor was the safety of the fleet trusted merely to this chance, though according to common observation, it might without rashness have been considered as a safe venture. At first it was imagined that a few frigates would be a sufficient convoy, but on a second thought that was over-ruled, and the *Ramilies*, a 74 gun ship, and the only ship of the line then ready, was dispatched with them. The care of the
Admiralty

Admiralty did not even stop there, but while the fleet lay wind-bound, two more sail of the line, the *Prothee* and the *Bienfaisant*, one of which returned to Corke and the other parted company, were got ready and added to the convoy, so that the fleet sailed at last under the protection of three ships of the line and three two and thirty gun frigates, a convoy much stronger than had ever been known to be sent on such an occasion, especially when the western squadron was at sea. He was very happy that the noble Duke had moved for the instructions, because when they should be produced he made no doubt but they would tend to a full exculpation of the Admiralty Board. It was enough for that officer that he had met the convoy and kept company with it till the 2d of August, off Cape St. Vincent, the very latitude the noble Duke had described, and it could hardly be presumed, that if Admiral Geary thought it necessary, that he would have neglected to accompany it farther. Commodore Johnstone fell likewise in with Captain Moutray, and informed him that when he left Lisbon an account had been received there that the combined fleet was sailed, so that taking the conduct of the Admiralty Board in any light, either in respect of the instructions under which Captain Moutray sailed and Admiral Geary acted, or in respect of subsequent events, no blame could be justly imputed to the Board at which he had the honour to preside.

The noble Duke had laid great stress on the fleet's having been permitted to sail in the track for Madeira, with an intention to touch at that island, and had asked, why that was suffered?—He would tell the noble Duke why—because the merchants, who owned the fleet and the ships cargoes, had expressly desired it; because it was thence forward a necessary place of destination, an essential part of the business of the fleet being to touch at Madeira and take wine on board. With regard to their going or not going to Madeira, the House must see, that it was a matter of perfect indifference to the Admiralty; they had no concern in the freights of the ships; all their connexion with the transaction was merely to convoy the fleet to the place of its destination, agreeable to the request of the merchants, and with such a convoy as was most likely to ensure the fleet a secure passage. The noble Duke had hinted that it was known the Spanish Squadron had been lying in wait for this fleet. The noble Duke was mistaken, and nothing could prove this more strongly, than the Spanish Admiral's letter to his own court, which had been intercepted,

and in which that commander expressed his extreme surprize at having fallen in with the fleet, declaring that "nothing could have been farther from his expectations." Another thing he must take notice of, which the noble Duke had observed, and that was, that the fleet ought to have had a stronger convoy;—here he must again differ in opinion from his Grace. The convoy he had already stated was unusually strong, besides the additional expectation of safety arising from the circumstance of the western squadron being at sea, for the purpose of intercepting the fleets of France and Spain. And, when it was considered, that the fleet was captured by so great a force, their Lordships would see, that, great as the calamity was, it was not to be avoided by any convoy, however strong, unless the western squadron had sailed as convoy.

The Admiralty could not possibly judge for Captain Moutray in all given situations; he had every information already stated under all the circumstances he had now mentioned, and as for the rest, the Captain was left to act agreeably to his own judgment, upon events as they might arise.—He would, as he said, when he first rose, move for another paper; the paper which he meant to call for, was so much of a letter from Admiral Geary, dated at sea, the 2d of August, as related to his falling in with the *Ramillies* and her convoy, bound to the West-Indies, which would shew the House clearly, what the probability of danger was, on the day the letter was dated, and whether every possible precaution had not been used, that human wisdom could suggest. Before he moved for that paper, his Lordship said, it might be necessary for him to observe, that the noble Duke had gone pretty much at large into a general review of the state of affairs—he should not follow the noble Duke into that subject, and the reason why he would not, was, because he did not think the present was the proper time for it; it might come on as a topic of discussion hereafter; one matter, however, he must take notice of, and that was, the noble Duke's complaint that Admiral Rodney had gone to Gibraltar with his ships, in his way to the West-Indies; here he must differ with the noble Duke exceedingly—so far from considering this a matter deserving censure, he was astonished to hear it spoken of in the language of complaint. In consequence of that circumstance taking place, we had taken and destroyed one entire Spanish fleet, consisting of six of their ships of the line, adding several of them to our own marine, dispersed and routed another,

other, and effectually relieved Gibraltar, Gibraltar, their Lordships would consider, could only be relieved by a powerful fleet; and surely, if the merits of any plan were to be judged of by events, there could not have been a more wise, nor a more glorious plan for this country, than that of sending Sir George Rodney to the relief of Gibraltar. Having said this, his Lordship declared, that he should only remark, in answer to all that the noble Duke had let fall in description of our future prospects, that they did not strike him in the same gloomy point of view; the situation of affairs was undoubtedly critical, but he saw no manner of reason for despair. His Lordship concluded with moving,

"That an extract from the letter of Admiral Geary, of the 2d of August, 1780, to Philip Steyens, Esq. as far as relates to his falling in with the *Ramillies* and her convoy, bound to the West Indies, be laid before this House."

The Duke of *Bolton* rose to reply, and after thanking the noble Earl, for having, not only seconded the motion, but moved for an additional paper, that he believed would materially contribute to clear up the matter, respecting which he thought an enquiry highly necessary, said the noble Earl had mistaken him in one point,—he had not complained of the convoy being too small, considering that the fleet of England was out, he had only meant, that had not that been the case, it ought to have been stronger, and he still thought Admiral Geary should have had instructions to have stretched across the latitudes of Cape St. Vincent, and seen the East and West-India fleets clear of the land, knowing, as Admiral Geary must have done, that the combined fleets were to sail from the port of Cadiz, and knowing also, as every seaman must know, that a strong wind from the north-west quarter frequently blew, with the current, which in that case sets in strongly, would consequently force the convoy to the eastward, and as it really turned out, drive it into the very mouth of the enemy. It was no rule, he said, because it had been usual for West-India fleets to touch at Madeira in time of peace, that they should do so in the midst of summer, when we were at war with France and Spain, and when we knew that it was highly probable the combined fleets would cruise in the track to Madeira. New situations required new customs, and he called upon the noble Lord to declare, whether he had not frequently signed orders for convoys going with West-India fleets, which were not to touch

Duke of
Bolton.

at Madeira? The noble Earl said, the merchants had desired that the fleet might touch at Madeira. If they had, to be sure it was a justification of the Admiralty, but it was rather extraordinary to him, to hear that they had, because the merchants who had conversed with him upon the subject, had all found great fault with the convoy's having been suffered to sail with an intention to touch at Madeira. The noble Lord said, that Geary had a powerful squadron under his command, he had so, and therefore the Admiralty were the more to blame. —But supposing that the noble Earl did not think it prudent to send out great force too far to the southward, and thereby neglect the home defence, the noble Lord had no apology, when he knew it was not in his power, consistent with the national safety, to protect the convoy by force of arms, to neglect that species of continual protection within his reach, he meant striking out such a track and such longitudes as would have kept it clear of the land, and consequently clear of danger.

When the noble Lord said, that the merchants would have this, and the merchants would have that, he held a language which, so far as it went, proved him totally ignorant of his duty, and unacquainted with the nature of his office.—It was absurd to suppose, allowing the fact to be exactly as the noble Earl had stated it, that the merchant, whose property the greatest part of the convoy was, would rush headlong on their own ruin. It was to the last degree preposterous, to even presume it, and it was in every respect incredible. He was ready to grant, that in point of convenience, and in several other respects, the merchants would have been desirous to have the convoy touch at Madeira; but under what idea?—That was the point, and the only one, which tended to reveal the truth.—Most certainly, on the idea that the western squadron, being then out, such operations, and such a plan for a naval summer campaign had been determined upon, as either to compel the enemy to remain in port, or if they durst have ventured out, as would have led to an engagement, and most probably terminate in victory.

Earl of
Sandwich.

The Earl of *Sandwich* rose again and said, that the track chosen was at the earnest request of the merchants, who insisted on the necessity of the convoy touching at Madeira: the loss was therefore their own, it was no concern of the Admiralty.—The noble Duke wished to know, if the Admiralty Board had not frequently signed orders for convoys bound for the West-Indies, in which no direction or liberty

was given to touch at Madeira in their way.—He often had, and presumed he would again, but the choice rested with the merchants, and the orders usually were founded on their requisition, whether the track was that of Madeira, or a more western longitude.—It was always usual for one of the annual fleets, at least to touch at that island.—The wine which that island produced made part of their cargo, and it was, he believed, well understood both in Great Britain and the West-Indies, that wine was at once a necessary and profitable part of the venture in all voyages of this kind.

The Duke of Bolton's motion was then put, with Lord Sandwich's amendment, and agreed to without any opposition.

November 17.

At one o'clock, the Earl of Pomfret, attended by the Governor of the Tower, came to one of the coffee-houses in Old-Palace yard, where his Lordship continued till the sitting of the House of Peers; he was then conducted to the chamber belonging to the Usher of the Black Rod, and at a little past three, his Lordship went to the bar of the House, conducted by the Governor and Sir Francis Molineux. As soon as Lord Pomfret got to the bar, the Lord Chancellor spoke as follows :

“ My Lord,

“ The House has commanded me to express the just offence and displeasure which the Lords have conceived, at the heinous insult which you have committed upon the dignity and privilege of this House, in the person of a Peer, by sending to the Duke of Grafton the letters which have been read; wherein are contained expressions most unworthy and unfit to be used by a person of honour, unto a person of the like quality: And I am further commander, by order of this House, to give you this solemn and severe reprimand for the same. But in consideration of the submission contained in the humble petition, which you presented to this House on Monday last, the Lords are content to remit your further punishment, upon your making such acknowledgment and submission to the House, and entering solemnly, and upon your honour, into such engagement as this House hath thought fit to order, and prescribe for that purpose.”

Earl Pomfret being then taken from the bar, and admitted to his seat in the body of the House, spoke as follows :

“ My

“ My Lords,

“ I felt the most sincere concern at having merited the displeasure of your Lordships, by sending to the Duke of Grafton, a Peer of this House, the rash and unadvised letters which have given your Lordships so much and so just offence, for which I most humbly ask pardon of this most honourable House: they were dictated by the suspicion of an affront, which I am now convinced his Grace did not offer. I do here promise solemnly, and upon my honour, that I will not further pursue any measure of violence against the person of the Duke of Grafton, or against any other person, upon the account of such suspicion, or of any thing that hath passed upon this occasion.”

His Lordship, having made this submission, was ordered to be discharged out of custody, upon paying his fees.

No. 1.

This day the following papers were laid before the House, having been moved for by the Duke of Bolton.

November 21.

By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

“ Whereas we have ordered Captain Garnir, commander of his Majesty’s ship Southampton, now at Spithead, to take under his convoy the five East-India ships, whose names are in the margin, together with the victuallers and storeships, named in the inclosed list, or such of them as may be arrived at Spithead; and also the trade bound to the West-Indies, and any other victuallers and storeships bound thither, as may be ready to sail, and then putting to sea, with the very first opportunity of wind and weather, to proceed down the channel, sending the Thetis, which we have put under his command, a-head, to inform you of his approach, and upon your joining him, to follow your orders for his further proceedings.

You are hereby required, and directed to hold yourself in constant readiness, to put out in the ship you command, when the Southampton makes her appearance in the offing, and taking her, and the Thetis, under your command, and the East-India Company’s ships, with the victuallers, storeships, and trade above-mentioned, under your convoy, put to sea, and proceed with them, as expeditiously as possible, consistent with

with their security, towards the places of their destination, touching at the island of Madeira, and taking in there, without a moment's loss of time, such wine as may be necessary for the companies of the said ships under your command; and then make the best of your way off Carlisle Bay, in the island of Barbadoes, seeing the East-India Company's ships in safety, as far as your way and theirs lie together.

‘ Upon your arrival off Barbadoes, you are to leave there the trade bound to that island and Tobago, and put the victuallers and storeships, laden with provisions and stores, for the use of his Majesty's land and sea forces, upon the leeward island station, under the charge of Captain Linzee of the *Thetis*, directing him to proceed with them to St. Lucia, or wherever else his Majesty's fleet and army may be; and, upon joining Sir George Rodney, or the commanding officer for the time being, of his Majesty's ships on the above mentioned station, to deliver the inclosed packet, bearing his address, and put yourself under his command, and follow his orders for his further proceedings.

‘ Having made this arrangement, you are to proceed in the ship you command, accompanied by the *Southampton*, to Jamaica, with such of the victuallers, storeships, and trade under your convoy, as may be destined to that place or Pensacola; seeing, in your way, the trade bound to Antigua, Nevis, Montserrat, and St. Christopher's, in safety to those islands respectively. And when you arrive off the east end of Jamaica, detaching the *Southampton*, with the trade bound to the ports on the north side of it, with directions to her captain to follow you to Port Royal, to which place you are to proceed, without a moment's loss of time, with the *Ramilles*, and the remainder of your convoy, putting yourself, and directing the captain of the *Southampton* to put himself under the command of Sir P. Parker, or the commanding officer, for the time being, of his Majesty's ships off Jamaica, and follow his orders for your further proceeding.

‘ And, whereas the *Arwin* galley, one of the store ships named in the afore-mentioned list, is laden with tents and camp equipage, for the troops in the Leeward Islands, you are, in pursuance, of the King's pleasures, signified to us by Lord George Germain, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, to pay particular attention to her, and direct the captain of the *Thetis* to do the like, and see her to St.

PARLIAMENTARY A. 1780.

Lucia, or wherever the army may be, without one moment's loss of time.

' Given under our hands the 14th day of July, 1780.

(Signed)

SANDWICH,
J. BULLER,
LISBURNES.

Capt. Moutray, Commander
of his Majesty's ship Ramillies, Plymouth.

By command of their Lordships,

PHIL. STEPHENS.

No II.

By the Commissioners, &c. &c.

' Whereas we think fit, that his Majesty's ships named in the margin, together with the Inflexible, if she arrives at Spithead in time, shall accompany you 100 leagues to the westward of Scilly, for the greater security of the East India ships, victuallers, storeships, transports, and trading vessels in your convoy, and we have given directions accordingly to Captain Cotton, of the Buffalo, now at Spithead; you are therefore hereby required and directed, in addition to our order of yesterday's date, to take the said Captain Cotton, and those ships under your command, for the greater security of the convoy, until you get the above distance to the westward of Scilly accordingly; and then you are to make the signal for them to separate, and to put in execution such further orders as the said Captain Cotton has received from us

' Given on the 15th of July, 1780.

(Signed)

SANDWICH,
LISBURNES,
R. MANN.'

Captain Moutray, Commander
of his Majesty's ship Ramillies, Plymouth.

No. III.

Extract of a letter from F. Geary, Esq; Vice Admiral of the White, &c. to Philip Stevens, Esq. Secretary to the Right Hon. the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty; dated at sea, Aug. 2, 1780.

' At four this morning, the advanced ship of the Squadron made signal for a fleet on the lee bow, which proved to be his Majesty's ships the Ramillies, Inflexible, Buffalo, Alarm, Thetis, and Southampton, with five East-India ships, and a large convoy for the West Indies: and as Captain Moutray's orders were, to take the Inflexible, Buffalo, and Alarm, 100 leagues.

A. 1780.

D E B A T E S.

leagues to the Westward of Scilly, and the Squadron under my command being then 92 leagues from that place, and as it was a convoy of great consequence, I thought it my duty for their better security to see them that distance, which I had done at one o'clock Scilly then bearing 54 East, dist. 112 leagues; and then the Ramilies, Thetis, and Southampton, and convoy, parted company, with a fine fresh wind at N. N. E.'

No IV.

Copy of a letter from Capt. John Moutray, Commander of his Majesty's Ship Ramilies, to Philip Stevens, Esq; dated at sea, the 9th of Aug. 1780

' SIR,

' I am sorry to acquaint you, for the information of their Lordships, that this morning at one o'clock being in the latitude of 36, 54. N. and longitude 15. 00. west of London, I perceived the lights of a fleet, which I judged were those of the enemy; upon which I immediately made the signal for the convoy to bring to on the starboard tack: at half past one made the signal to make sail after lying to, and keep close to the wind, which was at N. N. E. till day light; I then found it necessary to make the signal for the convoy to disperse, finding to my utter astonishment three flags, and the greatest part of the combined fleet in chase of them, and seven line of battle ships and a frigate well up in the wake of the Ramilies, Southampton and Thetis; but by dint of sailing they happily escaped: a great number of the convoy in a short time after struck, and I have the greatest reason in the world to believe. the greatest part of them must unavoidably be taken, as a number of ships was firing at them:

' In consultation with the Captains Garnier and Linzee, I have dispatched Capt. Linzee in the Thetis being the best sailer, with this unfortunate account to their Lordships.

' If I can weather the fleet, I shall proceed off Madeira to the place of rendezvous to take from thence the ships that may have escaped, as frigates will no doubt be sent to intercept them, the enemy having taken several ships that had the sealed rendezvous.

I have the honour to be, &c

(Signed)

JOHN MOUTRAY.'

November 22

The Duke of Bolton gave notice, that as no business was expected to come on before the recess, previous to his making the motion for laying before their Lordships the instructions

Duke of Bolton.

given by the Admiralty Board to Capt. Moutray, in consequence of which, were the question to be taken up at present, there would be a very thin attendance, he took the opportunity of informing the House, that he would defer his intended motion till early after the Christmas recess.

(On the 27th of November the House adjourned to the 25th of January, 1781.

January 25, 1781.

Lord Stormont.

Lord Stormont rose, and informed their Lordships, that he was charged with the delivery of a message from his Majesty, which he offered in the usual form. The message was accordingly read, and was conceived in the following terms :

“ George R.

“ His Majesty judged it proper to acquaint the House of Lords, that during the recess of Parliament, he has been indispentably obliged to direct letters of marque and general reprisals to be issued against the States-General of the United Provinces, and their subjects.

“ The causes and motives of his Majesty’s conduct on this occasion are set forth in his public declaration, which he has ordered to be laid before the House.

“ His Majesty has with the utmost reluctance been induced to take an hostile measure against a state, whose alliance with this kingdom stood not only on the faith of ancient treaties, but on the soundest principles of good policy. His Majesty has used every endeavour to prevail on the States-General to return to a line of conduct conformable to those principles, to the tenor of their engagements, and to the common and natural interests of both nations and has left nothing untied to prevent, if possible, the present rupture.

“ His Majesty is fully persuaded that the justice and necessity of the measures he has taken will be acknowledged by all the world. Relying therefore on the protection of Divine Providence, and the zealous and affectionate support of his people, his Majesty has the firmest confidence, that by a vigorous exertion of the spirit and resources of the nation, he shall be able to maintain the honour and dignity of his crown, and the rights and interests of his people, against all his enemies, and to bring them to listen to equitable terms of peace.”

“ G. R.”

His Lordship likewise presented several state-papers, eight in number, consisting of the memorials presented within the last eighteen months by Sir Joseph Yorke, his Majesty’s Ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the States General

neral of the Seven United Provinces. The deputy clerk of the crown having read all but the last; when he came to this last number, which was a copy of a treaty of commerce, to be agreed upon between the States General of the United Provinces and the United Independent States of America, entered into on the behalf of the United Provinces, by the grand pensionary of Amsterdam, Van Berkel, and on that of the United States of America, by Mr. John Lee, executed at Breda, and dated September 1778—his Lordship being at the table, said in a low voice to the clerk, “You need not read any part but the first and two last articles.” The clerk accordingly proceeded.

His Lordship was rising to make his intended motion, when the Duke of *Richmond* rose, and asked if the papers now read contained all the information the noble Viscount proposed to lay before the House? Until he was satisfied on that head, it was impossible for him to know how to conduct himself. His Majesty now made a communication to the House of a measure which he thought fit to adopt during the parliamentary recess. He ordered certain papers to accompany that communication, which, however necessary in themselves, were imperfect. Before therefore any farther step was taken, he wished to know from the noble Viscount, whether those papers contained the whole of what was intended to be communicated? Lord Stormont remained silent. His Grace observed, that the papers on the table contained only a partial account; that nothing appeared concerning the motives and reasons which influenced the conduct of the States General; consequently, nothing which could be relied on. For his own part, he should ever prefer no account to a partial one. He wished, at this particular crisis, to strengthen the hands of government as much as possible; but the duty which he owed to his sovereign, his country, and himself, forbid him to approve of measures which, under the semblance of wisdom, equity and vigour, might prove big with ruin, mischief and injustice. Perceiving that the noble Viscount seemed disinclined to give any answer; if the House was to trust to the imperfect, garbled information now before it, he should at least take care, that, such as it was, the House should hear it. The noble Viscount, when the clerk read the title of Number 8, desired him to read it short. He acquiesced, in hopes that other materials, if called for, would be given; but the noble Lord's silence not having indicated any such intention, he would insist to have number 8 read at length.

The

Lord
Chancel-
lor.

The Lord *Chancellor* said that it was of very little consequence, he believed, whether the paper alluded to was read short or long. The title of it fully imported its contents. It was a treaty between the States General of the seven United Provinces, and the United States of America, as they termed themselves. The intimation given to the clerk by the noble Viscount was no act of the House. It was a proposition made by the noble Lord to save time and unnecessary trouble, and was merely acquiesced in by connivance; for without doubt, in the ordinary course of proceeding, the noble Duke had a right, if he thought proper, to desire the paper to be read verbatim.

It was not to be expected that the noble Viscount could give an answer. His Majesty had charged him with the delivery of the message, and of the several papers that accompanied it, which was the information intended to be given. They were sufficient, in his opinion, though there were no other documents. The manifesto included in the state papers fully justified the measure. It stated that treaty which was the subject of the present conversation; a treaty expressly entered into between an ancient ally and our own rebel subjects. It would have been criminal and perfidious in any power in a state of common amity with us; it was doubly so coming from an ally; and what, if possible, aggravated the conduct of the States General, and gave it still a deeper complexion, it was secretly carried on at a time when we were in a state of actual alliance and professed friendship: yet, though there were no other objection to what had been urged by the noble Duke, there was enough to fortify him in his opinion of the impropriety, or rather informality, of entertaining any other question or consideration whatever, till his Majesty's message should be first disposed of.

Duke of
Richmond

The Duke of *Richmond* rose with some warmth, and lamented the situation every noble Lord stood in who differed from ministers. They had every thing to contend with, and that without the most distant prospect of success. They were certain to be over-borne by numbers; and besides the evil flowing from bad measures, which they were bound to feel in common with others, they suffered the further mortification of having their efforts imputed to improper motives; but while he was conscious that he acted upon right motives, he would prefer his duty to every other consideration, and encounter whatever difficulties might stand in the way.

The

The noble and learned Lord talked of acquiescence and connivance respecting the reading the paper marked No. 8, short. For his part, if ministers determined to withhold all other information but the partial extracts on the table, he would neither acquiesce nor connive at the short reading proposed; if their Lordships were to give a sanction to the present measure, in a manner, in the dark, he would for one insist that No. 8 be read at full length. It was all their Lordships had to guide and lead them through this mysterious and unaccountable business, and he was determined that he would at least make the experiment of learning whether or no the paper contains any thing which should render it more clear and satisfactory? If not, he should most certainly move for all the information or proceedings in this business; and as he foresaw he should, as usual, be out-voted by a great majority, he would take an opportunity of testifying, by a protest, signed with his name, his disapprobation of a war, which, for aught that yet appeared, had been wantonly commenced, and might be productive of the most fatal consequences.

The deputy clerk of the crown then proceeded to read the treaty or paper marked No. 8. which was very long; as soon as it was finished, Lord Stormont and the Duke of Richmond presented themselves at the same instant to the woolsack, and after a short pause his Grace was permitted to go on.

He said, he felt the most earnest desire that the proceedings Duke of and deliberations of the present day might be accompanied Richmond with unanimity. He was aware of the very disagreeable predicament in which he stood. He foresaw the event of any opposition he could make; and that every thing suggested at that side of the House, would be over-ruled. He knew, likewise, that the present measure was a popular one. He was not ignorant of the imputations which would be thrown out on whoever opposed it in any form, or upon any ground; but not even all this, his earnest wish for unanimity, his being overborne by numbers, or any other circumstance alluded to, should deter him from a faithful and conscientious discharge of his duty. Upon that single principle he had always determined, and ever would act; and notwithstanding the various discouragements he should have to encounter with, he would nevertheless steadily persevere. He had hoped, at the outset of this business, that every paper or communication necessary for their Lordships' full information would be laid before the House; but from what already passed, he was convinced that nothing was more vain and idle than such an expecta-

expectation. Ministers had previously determined there sh^d not, and that experience had proved, beyond doubt, was sufficient even in the most sanguine mind to banish all hopes of success.

He had long since determined to absent himself from any attendance in that House, and he believed this would be the last time should ever trouble them upon any thing which immediately related to the conduct of government in respect of the American war. Be that as it may, the present occasion was, in his opinion, clearly out of the question. He confessed he was much astonished to learn, by what fell from the noble Lord on the woolsack, that it was the intention of ministers that the decision of that day must be taken from a few partial extracts from the instructions given to the British ministers at the Hague the ministerio formed upon those extracts, and a project or pretended treaty between Van Berkel and Mr. Lee.

Such being the conduct of ministers, he was reluctantly forced to seek other and more relative information. Though entertaining no prospect of success, it would afford him an opportunity of declaring his sentiments to the public, and entering the reasons which induced him to oppose the measure now intended in the manner and on the grounds on which it was meant to oppose it, on their Lordships' journals. As soon therefore as the noble Viscount should move an address, in answer to the King's message, he intended to move an amendment for the production of the whole of the correspondence, or for copies of all memorials, instructions, answers, &c. which had passed between the British cabinet and the States General of the United Provinces.

Lord Stormont. Lord Stormont then rose, and said, that however willing he might be to address their Lordships in relation to the royal message with which he was charged, and in answer to which it was his intention to move an address, he waited with pleasure till the noble Duke who spoke last had explained his intentions, as he always did when his Grace had any thing to communicate to the House, no person being better informed, nor more capable of treating with ability every question which came under his Lordship's consideration.

As to the defectiveness of the information objected to by the noble Duke, he little thought that any such objection would have been started; and as to moving for papers, till the message was disposed of, he believed it would be a proceeding altogether unprecedented and unusual. Whatever

the judgment of the House hereafter might be, he understood, that the message was always previously determined upon, as a matter of course.

His Lordship then proceeded to shew, from the papers, that the measure of issuing letters of marque and reprisals, was not only justifiable, but was founded in necessity and sound policy. The States-General had behaved basely and treacherously: connected by the most solemn alliances; united by ties the most sacred and indissoluble; bound by common interest, and urged by motives of mutual preservation, we had nothing apparently to fear from them:—we had, on the contrary, every thing to expect which affection, cemented by a mutuality and reciprocity of interest and advantage, could promise, and honour and fidelity could exact.

But in all these expectations we had been miserably disappointed, and basely deceived. The States-General had violated their most sacred engagements; they had acted as secret enemies; and what was worse, they carried on those secret machinations under the colour of friendship—They had entered into a conspiracy with our natural enemies and rebel subjects, to dismember the British empire, and to parcel out our dominions. This would be base and unworthy even from a neutral power; but when it came from a pretended ally, and an avowed friend, it deserved public execration; it stamped the nation who could be guilty of it with infamy and ignominy, and called aloud for the most exemplary chastisement.

The papers on the table, considering the ancient treaties subsisting between the two nations, established the truth of every thing which he had affirmed, and would justify remarks of still greater severity. He would pass over the singular obligations for which the republic stood indebted to this country. He would only rest his arguments upon plain facts, collected either from the terms of existing treaties, or the consequent conduct of the States-General.

By the treaty of 1674, it was true, the States-General were permitted to carry indiscriminately all goods, commodities, and merchandize whatever to our enemies, as well as friends and neutrals; but by the two subsequent treaties of 1678, and 1716, it was specially provided, that when either power should be attacked in any of their dominions, that the other, upon the *casus fœderis*, shall assist with a certain number of troops and ships. By this it was plain that the subsequent treaty, at a certain period, at least, supersedes the

treaty of 1674; that is, after the requisition made by the party attacked, to his ally, and the assistance given in consequence of that requisition, which the treaty provides shall be at the end of two months from the date of the demand. Upon these plain, notorious facts, how then will the case stand? Most certainly, that the treaty of 1674 is rendered of none effect by the two latter treaties of 1678 and 1716; for surely it would be the most absurd, contradictory, and nugatory construction possibly conceivable, to suppose, after the requisition made, the quotas granted, and actual hostilities commenced, that the ships of Great Britain, or the republic, taking the event either way, should trade and carry on a commerce with France or Spain, or any other power, which either, and of course, both after a certain period must be at war with; it was repugnant to the most familiar rules of common sense and common experience. Either the treaty of 1674 ceases to operate the very instant the *casus fœderis* begins to exist, or both cease; or, if possible, a greater absurdity would take place, that of the treaty of 1674 being always binding on the contracting parties, and the treaties of 1678 and 1716 never binding upon either.

He would rely on the judgment of their Lordships, whether by fair construction this was not the spirit, as well as letter of the treaties alluded to; and if after application made, and the expiration of the interim between the application and the performance of the condition, was not the very instant in which the subsequent condition was to take place, and to supersede the precedent one, in relation to the liberty of supplying the enemy with military stores, as included in the general and unqualified description of all goods, merchandizes, &c.

But even to waive this point, and relinquish every advantage which might be drawn from it in favour of Great Britain, it would not be improper to state the transaction in point of fact.

What did the republic wish to obtain by this exclusive liberty, so contrary to the law of nations, as that of supplying the enemy with the means of carrying on the war? The fact was simply this: the Dutch claimed the right of supplying the enemy; it is, say they, a commercial transaction, the mere object of gain; let then their Lordships look upon it even in that light. Neither the republic, nor any of their subjects suffered any detriment as merchants or common carriers; for the bottom of ship, when vessels laden with military stores were seized, were liberated; and if the property

was Dutch, a reasonable and fair price was given as an equivalent to the owner: if, on the other hand, the cargo belonged to an *enemy*, it was confiscated, and condemned as legal prize; in neither case was the spirit of the treaty of 1674 violated. The treaty never meant nor expressed in any way that Dutch bottoms were to protect the goods of an enemy, nor any more than that Dutch property, though designed for the use of an enemy, should not be condemned as lawful prize in our Admiralty Courts.

After having endeavoured to prove, by a great variety of collateral arguments, that we had not departed from the treaty of 1674, considering it as a distinct engagement; that the *casus fœderis* began to exist as soon as the time limited for performing the terms of the requisition was expired; supposing even that we had broke one treaty, and were not of course entitled to claim the succours from Holland; yet in that event, the conduct of Holland amounted to an unprovoked aggression on their part, so long as they continued to conceal their treacherous intentions, under the fair appearance of friendship and alliance. It was true, the treaty, or the contents of the paper signed No. 8. was a *secret* transaction, as to the mode of conducting it; but it was avowed in its object, and specific and direct in its consequences: it originated in treachery, and was open, direct, and premeditated, intended to be carried into execution at some given or eventual period. It was making war upon this country, and was a species of aggression every way correspondent in its nature to an avowed act of hostility. It was a treaty with a part of our subjects in open rebellion, and called into question, as all other offensive acts do, our undoubted rights and sovereign dominion over a part of our own territories.

His Lordship next entered into the detail of the conduct of the States-General, respecting either their direct refusing to give any satisfaction, or by their evading to give any by studied plausibilities, pretended impediments, and artful delays, originating from a fixed system of procrastination; observing, that they had either trifled with our Minister, treated his remonstrances with neglect, or denied all kind of satisfaction. He did not wish to be understood as involving the whole of the United Provinces in the same general charge; their councils were, unhappily for the body of the people, influenced by faction, and by partial interest. They were under the dominion of a *Gallo-American* faction, and the people were seduced and led away from their *real* interests, through the arts and machinations of selfish and ambitious men. He should ever

condemn any policy which had not justice and good faith for its basis ; because the contrary seldom failed of bringing after it its own punishment, honesty he would ever maintain was the best policy, and moral rectitude should ever be received by him as a test of the wisdom, as well as justice, of those kingdoms or states, which made it the rule or basis of their public conduct. He had no doubt but the time would shortly arrive, when the people of Holland, now infatuated, or ruled by a *Gallo-American* faction, would perceive their error, and punish the authors of their misfortunes in a manner suitable to their deserts. It was, in his opinion, astonishing, how they could be so far seduced ; or how they could sacrifice the first principles of prudence and policy to the imaginary and fanciful expectations of interested or speculative men. He was persuaded, that this infatuation, besides not being prevalent among the *body* of the people, was far from being universal, even among the governing powers. The *true* friends of their country looked upon their interests in another view ; it was indeed impossible that it could be otherwise. Every wise Hollander must see at once, that Great Britain was the only real ally and casual protector of the republic against the ambitious designs of her powerful neighbours : such a man must acknowledge, that if the power and consequence of Great Britain should be broken, or diminished, according to the evident schemes of her enemies, that the ruin or conquest of *his own* country could only be suspended, or deferred, till some of the great powers of Europe should think proper to do so, and none more likely than that power of whom his country had ever justly retained the best founded jealousies and apprehensions, and whose superiority would be the natural result of the fall of Great Britain : in short, good faith, mutual interest, and mutual preservation, extension of commerce, ancient alliance, affection, and every other circumstance which can bind or connect nations together, served to shew the blind as well as wicked policy of entering into a conspiracy with our rebellious subjects, and with their natural enemies, determined and meditating equally their own destruction with ours.

If that illustrious General, the Duke of Marlborough, or that immortal hero, the Prince of Orange, the great champion and defender of our liberties, were now alive, he would submit to their greatest admirers, whether they would not adopt a similar policy to that which dictated the present measure ? Whether the latter, as Prince of Orange, would not have strained every nerve, and made every effort in his power in order to break and disconcert the dangerous league entered into

into by the House of Bourbon; whether, as Prince of Orange, he had seen Great Britain in its present situation, he would not immediately perceive the downfall and destruction of his own country involved in that of Britain? And, finally, as King of Great Britain, he would not risque every thing sooner than submit to the pride, insolence, and wicked ambition of France and her unnatural confederates?

His Lordships was proceeding to explain the conduct of Van Berkel, the grand pensionary, when he was called to order by the Duke of Richmond.

The Duke of *Richmond* rose, he said, to speak to order, which he was well warranted to do, as the noble Lord whom he now interrupted had manifestly transgressed the established rules of debate. The noble Lord, in the course of his speech, instead of confining himself to the subject matter of the message, in answer to which he had proposed an address, and the papers which accompanied it, argued from presumptive facts, totally unfounded, in respect of the necessary evidence required on such occasions in that House. This would be extremely improper and irregular, in any one of their Lordships, but was doubly reprehensible in the noble Viscount, who, from the high post he occupied in his Majesty's Government, as well as the opportunities he had of learning the most early and secret information, carried with it peculiar weight, and of course made a suitable impression on those who heard him.

If the noble Lord had any information on the subject, on which he spoke with so much confidence, he must have gathered it from common report, or through the channel of office; if the former, it would be indecent to argue upon it in the character of a confidential servant of the Crown; if the latter, it was his duty to lay his information, and the authority whence he derived it, before their Lordships.

There was one idea that pervaded the whole of his Lordship's speech, which seemed to him extremely erroneous, and was the only ground on which the manifesto or message, in his opinion, could stand; that was, considering the rough draught of a project or plan to be agreed to by the Seven United Provinces, and the United States of America, as an original paper binding upon the respective parties. This, it was clear, was a mere project! indeed the tenor of the paper, as well as the concluding article, expressly proved it, for it says, to be entered into by the parties mentioned. Van Berkel, and Mr. Lee, the acknowledged subjects of two independent
states

states, sketch out a plan of a future treaty to be acceded to by those states. To give this plan effect, the consent of both those states must be procured; but after a period of more than two years, so far from there being any ratification of this ideal treaty, there is not a scrap of paper, nor a single proof of any kind whatever, that either of the presumed principals in this transaction ever heard a syllable relative to the negotiation or pretended treaty, much less that they had approved of it; yet the treaty is made the only ground of justification of those who advised the issuing the manifesto, and sending the present message.

His Grace, after some further observations of the same tendency, concluded with affirming, that the noble Lord had deviated from the established rules of parliamentary proceeding, when he called him to order, and repeated his intention of moving for the whole correspondence, as soon as his Lordship had concluded his speech.

Lord Stormont. Lord Stormont said, he was far from acquiescing in the rule laid down by the noble Duke, as binding upon the members of that House; that no fact was to be stated, or opinion formed, but upon information regularly in possession of the House. If there was such a rule, daily experience proved that it had not been observed, or indeed at all attended to by the noble Lords who generally spoke from that part of the House in which the noble Duke sat. He believed a conduct the very reverse of this was almost uniformly pursued; reports and hearsays were frequently substituted for facts; and conclusions were drawn, and arguments raised, as if they had been in full proof: and repeated accusations urged, apparently ill founded, at the time, or which had proved so afterwards. None of their Lordships more earnestly wished than he, that the regularity of their proceedings should be preserved, nor none felt more sensibly whenever they were violated; which, he was free to say, too often happened to be the case. He indeed remembered a period (at the time he first had the honour of a seat in that House) when its proceedings were conducted with gravity and dignity. It was not however the case at present.

He observed, that the noble Duke sought a species of information which was publicly known. The Dutch Gazettes were full of the motives which directed the conduct of the States General. After the most pressing entreaties and repeated condescensions on our part, when the paper which the noble Duke so warmly contended ought not to be considered as an act of the republic, because it appeared to be no more than a project or plan of a treaty;—when this paper was laid
by

by our ambassador before the States General, instead of disavowing it, they only disclaimed having any knowledge of it in general terms; and when an opening was given to them to ~~justify~~ ^{justify} the act, they declined to avail themselves, and came to a determination to refuse any satisfaction, and disposed of it *ad referendum*, to be taken up, or not, at some future opportunity.

If this was not an avowel of the treaty or project, it was clearly little short of it; and for his part he could see scarce any difference between a public act of the state, and a private act of an hostile nature committed by a subject, when the governing part of that state denied satisfaction, or refused to punish the offender.

His Lordship next stated the several stages of the progress of this business, as confirmed by the papers referred to their Lordships: and contended that the States General had acted more unfriendly and substantially hostile to us than our natural enemies the French; for although the latter, for some time before they publicly declared themselves, had been secretly assisting our enemies with military stores, by conniving at the private engagements entered into by their merchants, and permitting some military adventurers to go into the rebel service; yet when complaints were made on the subject, and remonstrances repeated, they were not always made without effect. This illicit commerce was frequently suspended, if not totally stopped, by specific orders from court; the cargoes relanded in some instances, and the sailing of the vessels countermanded in others. This was the conduct of a rival and inimical power, whereas not one of the remonstrances presented by the British minister at the Hague was in the least attended to. The noble Duke called for the counter correspondence, or the answers of the States General to those several remonstrances. It refreshed his memory, and helped him to give the noble Duke an answer to his asking what was the reason that none of the papers respecting the conduct of the States General, as stated by themselves, were laid on the table? He could satisfy his Grace by saying there were none, for the States General declined, under various pretences, to give any satisfaction whatever.

The consequence of all this was, that the Dutch, by being considered as friends and allies, it being their interest to be considered in that character, injured us daily in the most tender part, and that more effectually than if they had actually declared publicly against us: their open enmity could not have

done us the tenth part of the mischief. They supplied our own subjects in open rebellion with all the means of resistance, and he was persuaded, upon the best information, that we should never have been in our present situation, were it our good fortune that St. Eustatia had been destroyed, or sunk in the ocean. France, at the period alluded to, had no intercourse with America, and when she began to have an intercourse with her, it was by stealth, and was far from affording our rebel subjects an assistance adequate to their wants; while Holland, by making her West India possessions the mart for our American subjects, furnished them with the means of continuing the rebellion, till France, and afterwards Spain, took a public part in the quarrel.

His Lordship observed, that his Majesty acted with all possible tenderness, wishing to avoid any thing which could administer the most distant cause of offence, or be the means of enrolling those whom he wished to consider as his friends and allies, in any measures which might in their consequences involve them in a war with France. Though by the treaty of 1678, as he observed when he was last up, we were authorised to call upon them within two months after any attack made on us, to declare war against that power, or to demand the succours prescribed by that treaty, of troops and ships, according as choice or convenience might suggest; yet on the aggression of France we forbore to insist upon the performance of that treaty; nor did we apply for those succours till France, with Spain and America, had confederated for our destruction. Nevertheless now, at the end of eighteen months, after so many repeated applications, in the character at one time of neutrals, at the other as allies, could the States General be induced to give satisfaction; so far from it, that they not only continued to supply our foreign enemies with military stores, but our own subjects, in actual rebellion; which was no less contrary to the law of nations, and the interpretation put upon the treaty of 1674 by themselves, than the first principles of justice, which bind nations not in a state of actual hostility to each other.

It was very unnecessary to trouble their Lordships further in detail; the present treaty, happily found in Mr. Laurens's papers, only confirmed what was sufficiently apparent before, that treaty furnished a key, which decyphered their whole conduct; and if the least ambiguity remained, the answer of the States General to the British minister last December put it beyond all question. They had proved themselves our most fatal

fatal enemies, because they were concealed. The French, on the contrary, entered later into the conspiracy, and declared earlier; consequently they acted fairer, and proved less dangerous. The republic of Holland acted the part of an assassin, who strikes and stabs in the dark, with a double prospect of success and impunity; and we had treated that perfidious people as they deserved, and as he would treat an assassin, if personally attacked; for had he arrested the blow, and seized the hand that gave it, he would drag the villain to the light, and when he was satisfied that he was the real offender, he would inflict the punishment which was due to so atrocious a crime.

He qualified his expressions, as not applying to the people of Holland in their collective capacity, attributing it chiefly to the effects of party, and the bold and interested views of a Gallo-American faction, bribed by lucre and usurious gain; but he trusted with confidence, that, be the cause what it might, the spirited and vigorous exertions of this country would convince them of their error, and make them repent of their perfidy. We had very wisely determined not to procrastinate any longer—we had given them the first blow, and would probably stun them into their senses. On the other hand, if we had continued to put up with further evasions, and studied delays, we should thereby have only enabled them to effect by open force what they had hitherto attempted to accomplish by treachery and concealment. This was by no means founded in conjecture; their conduct bespoke their intention; for while they were endeavouring to amuse us, and at the same time continuing to refuse giving us the least satisfaction, they were actually making preparations for a state of hostility, a further evidence that they were meditating on the means of maintaining, by open force, when the moment should arrive, in which all attempts of further concealment, they foresaw, would prove impracticable.

He depended much on the magnanimity of the nation, and the happy opportunity which his Majesty's measures gave of crushing the evil, before it arose to a dangerous degree.—The Dutch were not yet in a state of preparation to effect the pernicious schemes they had formed; and he made no doubt but one or other of the following events would be the consequence; which was all that Great Britain aimed at:—either the people of Holland, from repeated losses and misfortunes, would compel their governors to act with justice, and fulfil the existing treaties; or that we should be able in a very

short time, by pursuing our present plan of hostility with vigour and effect, to render that republic of no avail or service to the hostile confederacy; the former was by much the more probable: losses, defeat and disappointment, if no other motive should operate, would beget murmur and discontent among the subjects of the republic; they would soon discover that they had much to lose, and not the most distant prospect of gain; their commerce would be annihilated, or suspended; they would tremble for the fate of their distant possessions; in short, they would be enemies at all events, secret or open; and he believed, there was not a noble Lord that heard him who could for a moment hesitate upon a choice. For these general reasons, founded in the unequivocal appearances he had mentioned, he was clearly of opinion, that the facts stated in the manifesto, thus authenticated by the papers on the table, contained the most ample justification of the propriety, sound policy, and justice of the measure communicated to their Lordships in his Majesty's message, in answer to which, he begged leave to move the following address:

" Most gracious Sovereign,

" We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to return your Majesty our humble thanks for your most gracious message, and for having been pleased to communicate to this House your Majesty's public declaration, setting forth the causes and motives which have obliged your Majesty to direct letters of marque and general reprisals to be issued against the States General of the United Provinces, and their subjects.

" We observe, with much concern and just indignation, that the governing part of a nation, whom the ties of common interest, and the faith of mutual engagements, should have made a sincere friend, has employed the most hostile and pernicious means to annoy an ancient ally, by leaguering with your Majesty's revolted subjects, and furnishing constant and effectual aids to your inveterate enemies.

" We acknowledge, with the highest satisfaction, and warmest sentiments of gratitude, your Majesty's wisdom, in endeavouring to bring the States General back to those principles which they have deserted, and in the reluctance you have shewn to proceed to hostile measures against a state connected with this country by the closest ties of mutual interest. Your Majesty's great moderation and forbearance strongly
aggravate

aggravate their conduct, which made the present rupture indispensablely necessary.

“ We beg leave to assure your Majesty, that we shall, with the warmest and most dutiful zeal, give every support to those vigorous measures which your Majesty has determined to pursue. We are sensible they are founded in justice and wisdom, and are such as the honour of your Majesty's crown, and the essential interests of the nation, require.”

The *Lord Chancellor* came from the woolstack to his place. He said, he would be obliged to put the question as moved by the noble Duke: he therefore begged to say a few words, in observation to what had fallen from the noble Lord, when he differed from the noble Duke; and if at any time he thought he saw cause not only to differ from the noble Duke, but likewise a necessity of speaking in strong terms of disapprobation, he should wish to entirely repress his sentiments, because he would be led to believe, if any improper expression came from his Grace, it had been inadvertently spoken. Guided therefore by this rule, he should ever avoid general accusations, or personal charges, direct or recriminatory; and abstain as much as possible, even in the heat of debate, from any thing which, out of that House, could not stand the test of that kind of language and personal respect, which was due from one gentleman to another. Fully persuaded of the propriety of so conducting himself, he heard with much uneasiness some charges made against the advisers of the present measure; for, though in point of form, matters of state were supposed to originate with the Sovereign personally, he was free to acknowledge that his Majesty's ministers, or advisers, were alone constitutionally responsible for the consequences.

This, however, did not make any difference as to the mode of parliamentary proceeding, in the first instance, which, he believed, uniformly declared, that when the Crown made any communication to Parliament, either from the throne, or by message, the speech or message was immediately taken into consideration, previous to the discussion of any other business. For his part, he thought the papers on the table contained every necessary proof to justify the measure: but if they had not, the order of their Lordships' proceedings would not, in his opinion, admit of any new matter being introduced, till the message was first disposed of.

On this ground he clearly conceived that the noble Duke's intended motion amounted to a direct negative, or, as the

noble Duke had announced it, to the postponing the address by way of a previous question. Taking it in either light, he rose chiefly to advertise their Lordships, that it struck him as such, and that he should consider it in that light.

Another error, as he conceived, the noble Duke had fallen into, was, that if the House agreed to the address moved by the noble Viscount, such an assent would bind their Lordships, and preclude all further enquiry and discussion. He could never assent to this conclusion, because he thought the whole business, or any part of it, was as open to reconsideration hereafter, as if no such motion had been ever made or carried; and it was only on this idea that the noble Duke could take up the question as he did; for certainly, if the case was such as his Grace understood it to be, that their Lordships were to be for ever precluded by the vote of this evening, there would be good ground for desiring further information by such of their Lordships as should think that already laid before them was not sufficient.

The noble Duke seemed to lay great stress on the circumstance, that the treaty was no more than a project. There would be some weight in this argument, if an opportunity had not been given to the States General to retract or disavow it; instead of that, their conduct amounted nearly, if not entirely, to an avowal or approbation of its contents; they postponed it *ad referendum*, and by so doing they disclaimed it in form, but acknowledged it in substance; for though he would allow, for argument's sake, that they were not prepared immediately to punish the offender, Van Berkel, they might have satisfied the British Court, by reprobating it in an abstract resolution, or opinion, expressing in general terms their total disapprobation, and declaring the impropriety or criminality of any of the subjects of the republic entering into a treaty with the rebellious subjects of another state, in amity and alliance with them. After some further observations, which he explained more at large when he came to speak to the question, his Lordship having received the Duke of Richmond's motion, read it. It was in substance as follows:

"That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that copies of all memorials, remonstrances, &c. which have been presented or received to or from the States General of the United Provinces, since September 1778, be laid before that House."

The Duke of *Richmond* then rose, and said, he had not heard a single reason assigned for withholding the whole of the correspondence

response between the British Cabinet and the States-General, which did not serve to fortify him in his first opinion, that it ought to be laid before that House, in order to enable their Lordships to come to a decision founded in justice and good policy: The only information their Lordships had to ground any vote upon was worse than none, because it was partial. The noble Viscount said, in argument, there was none; if that could be depended upon, his motion could carry nothing with it; it would be a mere non-entity: if productive of no good, neither could it do any harm. The noble Lord on the woollack, for whose abilities and candour he entertained a very high respect, said, the motion implied a negative. He begged pardon for differing from the learned Lord, but he thought otherwise; for it imported no more than this, that the King with the advice of his ministers, issued the manifesto, which contained the motives of their conduct. Now, in his opinion, the fair inference was this, that the manifesto was issued upon the evidence contained in the papers, or it was not; if it was, he, for one, did not think that the evidence of the intentions of the States-General was such as to justify hostilities on our part; consequently, that other evidence was necessary, which, if not produced, as he had no expectation it would; in that case only it was, that his motion imported a negative to that made by the noble Viscount for an address.

The noble and learned Lord had insisted, that the postponing the complaint against Van Berkel *ad referendum*, and refusing to punish him, amounted to an avowal of the act with which the pensionary was charged; this was a reasoning he could never adopt. It was novel in itself, and of the first impression. It was well known, that the forms of deliberation and proceeding, and the nature of the Dutch constitution, were tedious and intricate. The latter was composed of various movements, and though he did not pretend to speak with accuracy or precision on the subject, it was more than probable, that the States-General were by no means empowered to give an explicit and precise answer on a subject of which all, or infinitely the greater part, of their constituents must have been ignorant. It was doubtful even when a power of punishment was vested in the States-General; but even if such a power was vested in them, their wonted caution and deliberate mode of proceeding fully justified their conduct; and he would appeal to every noble Lord who heard him, if there were not innumerable possible cases in which a subject of this country might offend against the law of nations, notwithstanding

withstanding which his punishment, instead of being taken up by the sovereign power of the state, must be delegated to our judicial or criminal tribunals; yet he fancied it ~~would~~ be deemed a most absurd conduct, by any power aggrieved, that a refusal on our part to violate the laws by withholding instant and exemplary punishment should be deemed an aggression sufficient to justify hostilities against us by the complaining party.

Another point, much insisted on by the noble Lords who supported the address, was, that the project, or plan, marked No. VIII. was considered by them as a treaty made between the States-General of the United Provinces and the United States of America. Nothing could be more repugnant to the truth. It could never be considered in that light; for at most it was no more than a plan, or project, conditional in its frame, and, as experience has since proved, nugatory in its consequences. It never was a treaty; it never was authenticated even as a project or treaty in embryo, within the knowledge and consent of the respective principals: nor had since, so long as from September 1778, to this very day, been confirmed or recognised: so that if he had no other objection to the measure, as justified and explained by the manifesto, or the message in consequence of it, that alone would be a sufficient reason for him to refuse his assent; for although no person entertained an higher personal respect for his Majesty than he did, nor could be farther from imputing any thing improper to him, he contended, that his ministers had made him assert a falsehood in that part of the manifesto where his Majesty is made to say, that the governing power in Holland *had* entered into a treaty with his Majesty's rebellious subjects in America.

After endeavouring to shew that the above was not only a forced construction, but a downright falsehood, he lamented in very warm terms, the alarming, nay, perilous situation of this country, which was driven into a contest with the three most formidable maritime powers of Europe; and, in all probability, if the prevailing reports were to be depended upon, there would shortly be added a fourth;—but Ministers seemed determined to risque all; they were grown desperate, and by driving every thing to extremity, vainly imagined, that in the midst of surrounding calamity, and national distress, their crimes or ignorance would be forgotten or overlooked. They had the modesty to preach up unanimity, and to claim confidence, when almost every succeeding

ing day afforded some fresh instance of their fatal ignorance and mischievous incapacity. The noble Lord over the way, after his repeated boastings, had, either through ignorance or breach of promise, suffered the dominion of the sea to be surrendered up to our rival enemies, and, by way of shewing our strength to contend with a third, had consistently avoided an encounter with even one of them single-handed.

The noble Lord in the green ribbon, while he refused to give any further information to their Lordships than the partial extracts on the table, acknowledged the existence of other information in one part of his speech, though he denied it in another. He referred their Lordships to the Dutch Gazettes, This was a language he never before heard used in Parliament, it was indeed treating their Lordships with a degree of haughtiness or contempt almost intolerable. He ventured to say, that there were some of their Lordships who never read a Dutch Gazette, and many who did, attended very little to the contents; but be that as it may, it was a species of information he never expected to hear gravely recommended to the great council of the nation by a minister in high office, and in great trust and confidence with his Sovereign,—to peruse the Dutch Gazettes as the only document necessary to enable them to advise their Sovereign, when called upon by him, at a most critical and important period. The noble Viscount referred their Lordships to a source of information to which, it was probable, he never resorted himself; for he presumed he was like his uncle, who *never* read a newspaper—*no, never!*—This contemptuous treatment was difficult to be borne. He knew it was in vain to oppose it, or seek redress. The people were infatuated; the nation was led blindfolded; and where any opposition or stand was made against those pernicious and destructive measures, corruption came in and swept every thing before it, and, by its irresistible effects, set truth and justice at defiance.

The noble Lord in the green ribbon had dealt in the marvellous as well as the improbable; he was bold in figure, and extravagant in metaphor; he had, indeed, used one somewhat out of the common road, which he should not have been much surprised to hear from the mouth of his brother Secretary [meaning Lord Hillsborough, and alluding to his being an Irishman]; he had recommended vigorous measures, and predicted their good effects; one of which was, that they would be the means “*of stunning the Hollanders into their senses.*” It was, he confessed, a curious method of bringing

bringing people to their recollection, by first depriving them of all sense and memory ; but he would not quarrel with the simile, though he doubted the justice of its application. It was evident, however, that this language was calculated to answer certain temporary purposes, to delude the people with false hopes, and prevent them from reflecting seriously, and of directing their attention to the reality of their situation.

His Grace spoke to a great variety of miscellaneous matter, which afterwards underwent a more full and detailed discussion, and gave several intimations, in the course of his speech, that as he perceived all endeavours to serve this country, which he looked upon as devoted, were in vain, he was determined for one to discontinue henceforward a mortifying and unavailing opposition,

Earl
Bathurst.

Earl Bathurst rose and said, he was much astonished how any noble Lord could entertain the least doubt of the secret intentions of the States-General, or, being satisfied of those intentions, could hesitate even for a moment about coming to a decision. It was very unnecessary, he believed, to endeavour to demonstrate what must be acquiesced in as soon as mentioned, that the States-General either did or did not know of the intrigues of Van Berkel. If they were acquainted with the transaction relative to the private treaty executed between the pensionary and Mr. Lee, and had not taken the necessary steps to undeceive our rebellious subjects, by passing a censure upon their own subjects, who had thus traiterquely taken upon them to confederate, not only for themselves, but the governing powers of the country, or state ; or being totally ignorant of what passes between the contracting parties, till informed by the British minister in the month of December last, when they postponed, *ad referendum*, the consideration of the complaint stated by said minister ; their conduct in his opinion, in either event, amounted to a justification of what had been secretly approved of, or connived at by them, or what being transacted without their knowledge, as soon as it was made public, met with their hearty approbation.

His Lordship observed, that he had heard now with much indignation, a repetition of the same language which had so often given such just cause of offence to every real friend to his country ; and which in his soul he believed, besides the particular personal offence it gave those whose conduct and sentiments were so unjustly and indecently traduced, had been productive of the worst consequences in respect of foreign

reign powers. Our counsels were described to be weak or wicked; our national state of defence totally inadequate to operations offensive or defensive; our finances exhausted, and, in short, every thing was urged that might, by its impression or tendency, invite the attacks of our declared enemies, shake or render our alliances of none effect, or create a disregard and contempt in those states which were deemed merely neutral.

When his Majesty, by the advice of his ministers, and approbation of his two Houses of Parliament, had adopted any measures in support of the dignity of his crown, the rights of Parliament, and the preservation of his kingdoms, those measures were arraigned in the most indecent terms: and when every other means of obstructing and defeating them failed, then it was the language of some noble Lords to predict national ruin, and to affirm that it was effected by the influence of corruption, or acts of ministerial imposition. This was what he would never endure, or pass by in silence, as long as he should have the honour of a seat in that House; it being evidently the language of falsehood and disappointed ambition; it could only originate in the worst motives, and deserved the resentment of the public at large, as well as their Lordships, every one of whom, who continued to support the measures of government, being involved in the general accusation. Was it possible to sit in that House, day after day, without feeling the strongest emotions of well-founded indignation.—To hear the conduct, of not only the noble Lords to whom his Majesty had entrusted the direction of his affairs basely and unjustly vilified, and their characters scandalously and indecently traduced;—charged with being wicked at one time, and incapable at another, or both, according as it corresponded with the views, or answered the purposes of their accusers;—as having entered into a conspiracy against the liberties of their country, and leagued for its destruction, but even every one of their Lordships who supported the measures ministers recommended.—To state those accusations was sufficient, for they contained in themselves their own refutation, and that they were no less malicious than ill founded. He had for a long series of years served his sovereign in several capacities, and he could lay his hand on his heart, and with truth affirm, that he always acted for the good of his country, to the best of his abilities: and that there was nothing the crown had to bestow could induce him to give a vote contrary to his conscience, or declare against what seemed to him to be the real interest of his country. If he

was not very opulent, he had sufficiently to put him above the poor temptations of place and emolument; and he could, in his conscience add, that he believed there was not a single noble Lord who heard him, and that had supported the measures so indecently asserted to have been carried through by the mere force of corruption, who did not act from motives equally honourable and conscientious with himself.

But it was plain whence all this arose; it arose from a wicked ambition; a lust of power and dominion; a thirst after the emoluments of office. It sprung from corruption, and the worst species of corruption, because it was incurable—"a corruption of the heart." Measures were to be opposed, because they were said to be the King's measures. Ministers were to be traduced, because they were ministers: they were vilified and envied on account of their situation. Opposition proceeded upon hopes formed of compelling ministers to resign; but what was worse than all,—than even personal persecution, or public accusation, the dearest interests of the country were sacrificed to effect the completion of those pernicious schemes. He trusted however, that the good sense of the nation had learned to trace the motives of such a conduct to their source; to see that it flowed from party rage, which is ever known to be the result of political despair and factious disappointment.

Duke of Richmond The Duke of *Richmond* instantly rose, and observed, that there was no great difficulty in making a general and particular application of what had just fallen from the noble Earl. It was directed against those who had, from the commencement of the present wicked, unnatural, and ruinous war with America, opposed the measures which gave it birth, and continued to the present minute to oppose and reprobate it in every stage of its fatal progress. It was particular, as personally applying to himself, for having imputed the persevering in a war, equally impolitic and unjust, to the power and irresistible influence of corruption. He assured the noble Earl, with all his warmth and eloquence, he had not convinced him of the contrary in either respect. He was still satisfied, that the war, if continued to be prosecuted against America, must inevitably terminate in the destruction of this country; and he was equally convinced, though he was far from stating it as a matter applying indiscriminately to all, or perhaps to any very considerable part of those who countenanced the present ruinous measures, that between two parties, thinking indifferently and impartially on the same subject, the balance had been weighed down by the means of corruption.

The

The noble Lord, with all those loud and warm professions of the disinterested motives on which he had acted since he became a servant of the crown, and that energetic eulogium pronounced by himself on his own public virtue, laid down one general proposition; "that opposition to the measures of government are always founded in party and factious motives; that failing to oust the administration for the time being, begets rage and disappointment; and these again beget personal enmity, malice, and ill-will." He was ready to take his Lordship's word for every syllable of the doctrine so far as it applied to himself. There was a period, and perhaps a long and the most valuable period of his Lordship's life, when he was known to be in strong opposition to the measures of the Court. His Lordship, it might be fairly presumed, now spoke as he once felt; he spoke from long experience. The struggle was tedious and mortifying, full of disappointment, and concluded with despair. No man, therefore, was a better judge of the various operations of the human mind under such circumstances; and so far as he retained a recollection of what passed in his own—it was scarcely to be doubted; it was fair to conclude, that a wicked, corroding ambition, whetted and increased by unavailing attempts, and a state of political despair, were, in his Lordship's contemplation, ever productive of malice and personal enmity, and "that worst species of corruption, a corrupt heart;"—but the noble Earl is a Tory; he was then in opposition to the Whigs; whoever opposed his friends, whether in or out of place, must have acted from factious motives and a corrupt heart.

The noble Lord had exerted his great talents in endeavouring to prove the folly and improbability of supposing that ministers would withhold from Parliament, or ever had, such information as was necessary for the full consideration of Parliament, when they came to decide upon any great or important question. This, he perceived, had been urged in favour of the present measure, as well as every other preceding one since the commencement of the present war. Now let their Lordships attend only for a minute to the case as it really stood within their Lordships' own knowledge, and derived from evidence within that House. Previous to the commencement of hostilities in America, the noble Lords who sat on that side of the House warned Ministers of the consequences which were likely to ensue. After hostilities had taken place, and that upon the assurances of a noble Lord at the table (Lord Sandwich) that the Americans were cowards and poltrons, and resembled an herd of sheep, who, in proportion

portion as they were numerous, were drove with the greater facility; when it was fatally discovered, that they were not so totally bereft of native courage, nor the means of resistance, as had been described by the noble Earl alluded to; did not those persons who disapproved of the war, make the most earnest and repeated efforts to substitute treaty for the sword, and instead of coercion, measures of blood and slaughter, and unconditional submission, recommend conciliation, and a security for and recognition of the political rights of our American subjects? When over-ruled and borne down by numbers in their repeated efforts to this effect, did not they continue to dissuade them from the mad pursuit, by predicting the interference of France? and when that event had taken place, had not the same men recourse to the same exhortatory persuasives in respect of Spain: and so on to the very instant he was speaking? Did not all their predictions turn out exactly as they were foretold, no matter what motives those predictions might have originated from? and was it not thence clear, that opposition were perfectly right in respect of the policy of the war? As to the other point, so strongly urged by the noble Earl, that whether ministers were right or wrong, they acted upon the most pure and honest motives, and that Parliament, as well as the nation, had approved of their conduct;—here he begged leave to differ from the noble Earl, as to the conclusion which he drew; for besides being convinced that corruption strongly operated in procuring a Parliamentary sanction to the several measures he had pointed out, her was authorized to say, that other aids were called in in order to the giving success to a favourite system—the aids of delusion, falsehood, imposition, and ministerial seduction. He could point, where he to consult his memory, innumerable instances of the kind during the progress of the war. He would just advert to one, however, which could not be doubted of, since it was acknowledged by a noble Lord in his place in that House, who presides at the head of one of the first departments in the state (Lord Sandwich) who, when the mad project of subduing America by force of arms was first conceived, instead of augmenting our naval force, at the commencement of a war, intended to be chiefly a maritime one, reduced the number of seamen from 20,000 to 16,000; and when afterwards reminded, that miscarriages and disappointments chiefly arose from our having an inadequate naval force, his Lordship did not controvert the fact, but had the confidence to rise in the same House, and in the same place, and acknowledge that he was conscious that the force

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voted was inadequate; but that he foresaw, if he had proposed what appeared to him to be an adequate force, it might probably have created an alarm in Parliament and the nation, and have tended to defeat the measures which had been previously agreed upon and settled by the King's ministers.

So far, therefore, from administration having acted upon the purest motives, or opposition upon the worst, it was evident, that the former had not only employed the general weight and influence, which is the established support or appendage of government, but had further strengthened their plans, and promoted this great object of their wishes, by trick, imposition, and deceit; while, on the other hand, though the motives of opposition might be called in question, their political foresight, and the truth of their repeated predictions, must stand uncontroverted and unimpeached; and in no one instance more strikingly so, than that one delusion begot a situation which made another necessary, till at length our affairs became so embroiled and pregnant with difficulties, that many who had perceived their error, found themselves brought into a predicament, in which it appeared to them more dangerous and fatal to recede than to push forward, trusting every thing to future events and speculative contingencies.

The noble Earl said, that all opposition to public measures were composed of the same ingredients, and that a love of power, &c. would ever operate to produce them, be the measures proposed ever so wise, salutary, and necessary. This he affirmed to be contrary to common experience and public evidence. He was ready to grant, that mixed governments gave birth to contrariety of sentiment and opinion, and of course, that the best and wisest measures were liable to be questioned and opposed; but he denied the inference the noble Lord had endeavoured to draw from the general observation. All administrations did not create the same degree of opposition, nor were they deserving of it; nor would all administrations, if compared at a subsequent period, stand the test of comparison, so as to be reduced to the same standard. He came into Parliament very young, but he was old enough to have a seat in that House through the whole of the glorious and successful administration of the Earl of Chatham (then Mr. Pitt); and he well remembered, though he believed every thing done by that celebrated statesman might not be universally approved of, that there was little or no opposition made in Parliament to his administration,

so long as he continued in office. He, for one, heartily concurred in such of his measures as came under deliberation when he was present; and yet he could say, that he had no intimacy nor political connexion whatever with his Lordship. He had scarcely a personal acquaintance with him, nor was he ever under his roof but once, and that merely upon a matter of business. He would not now enter into any comparative view with the present administration and that conducted by that able and honest statesman. He would observe, however, that the glories of that administration were now all tarnished, or their effects no longer felt; and that before the very monument designed to perpetuate them was finished.

His Grace, early in his speech, in reply to Earl Bathurst, took notice, that what he had said relative to corruption, though he had literally meant and applied it to even the majority of that House, he did not expect that his Lordship would have taken it up with so much severity; for as it was the doctrine of the noble Earl and his friends, that all government must be carried on by force or corruption, and as he understood it was not the professed design of the present set of men in power to introduce a government by force, by first superseding the forms of the constitution, it was natural to conclude, that they had embraced the other part of the alternative, that of carrying on the business of government through the influence of corruption.

Earl of
Chester-
field.

The Earl of *Chesterfield* rose to the question as soon as the Duke of Richmond sat down, and arraigned, in very severe terms, the conduct of certain Lords in that House, who, while they so strenuously contended for the right of free discussion and opinion in their own case, denied it to their opponents. Whoever had the misfortune to differ from them, was instantly pronounced to be weak, ignorant, or incapable; and not even contented with denying them all ability, they added to the rest charges of the most criminal and dishonourable nature; if it was not weakness, it was corruption; so that it was impossible to escape from the obloquy meant to be thrown upon them in any event.

This, surely, was a conduct on the part of those who pursued it equally unjust and unbecoming, and struck at the very essence of parliamentary independence; it was arrogant, to say no worse, in one event, and indecent in the other; and if charges of that kind were to be permitted, most certainly the party thus accused were every way entitled and
justi-

justified in recriminating: if noble Lords of a certain description thought fit to charge folly and corruption on their opponents, those traduced were warranted to retort the accusation back again; and presume, that none could make such unjust charges, had not conviction arose from internal evidence arising in their own breasts.

As to the measure communicated by his Majesty to the House, he was of opinion, that it was dictated by political necessity, which left no choice to the King and his ministers. Holland, through the whole of their conduct, since the commencement of the rebellion in America, manifested a most inimical and treacherous disposition towards this country; which was evident, as well by the protection and countenance they shewed to the rebel pirate Paul Jones, while he lay in the Texel, as by the late conduct of one of their admirals at St. Eustatia, who not only saluted, or returned the salute of the rebel vessels, but even confiscated the property of our subjects, who had captured some of the rebel ship and property, and brought them into that island. He was perfectly persuaded, for one, that Holland only waited to declare publicly, what she had been long meditating, namely, till her navy was in a condition to act offensively, and to afford protection to their commerce and extensive dominions; or, as occasion might offer, of acting hostilely against us in confederacy with France and Spain.

Such being the conduct and apparent ultimate views of Holland, he was firmly persuaded, that the measure now under consideration was the only one which could be adopted, consistent with national dignity, and the security and preservation of the state; and if fate should determine that we must fall, which in one event would most certainly be the case, he could not for a moment postpone the decision; but rather prefer to fall with honour, than survive with infamy and disgrace.

The Duke of Chandos, after pronouncing a very high eulogium on the public and private virtues of his Majesty, and his good opinion of the laudable intentions of his ministers, though they had not been always attended with the wished-for success, said, he most heartily approved of the spirit and vigour which manifestly dictated the present measure. He made no doubt but it would be productive of more than one salutary effect. Besides disarming a pretended friend, but concealed enemy, from carrying their faithless and destructive schemes into execution, it would convince our open foes of the

Duke of
Chandos.

the fixed determination and magnanimity of this country, though surrounded by an host of foes, and contending for her rightful dominion over so great a body of her own unnatural and rebellious subjects.

He acknowledged that our situation was critical and perilous, and that opportunities might have been lost; but it was too late to take a retrospect, and nothing now remained to be done, but to call forth the whole resources and strength of the country, and employ them effectually against our enemies. It was in vain to contemplate the magnitude of the danger for any other purpose, but as it might suggest the means of surmounting it; and whether the treaty or project negotiated and signed by Van Berkel and the Congress Delegate had been perfected, or formally approved of by the States General, was, in his apprehension, at this stage of the business, of very little importance. It was evident in every one point of view the matter could be impartially and rationally considered, that their conduct was such throughout as fully justified the measure which ministers had advised their sovereign to adopt. Upon this ground he must of course give his negative to the motion made by the noble Duke, and his hearty affirmative to the address moved in answer to his Majesty's message.

Marq. of
Rocking-
ham.

The Marquis of *Rockingham* expressed his astonishment at the novel language which had prevailed that day on the opposite benches. The whole ministerial system of politics had been changed; opinion, suspicion, and vague and uncertain appearances had been substituted for facts, and motives urged or approved of for precipitating the nation into a war, which, he believed, never before influenced the decisions of a council of state in a civilized country. He was not, for one, much surprised at any absurdity which may have prevailed in his Majesty's councils, so long as the present administration retained their guidance and direction. His astonishment arose from a very different cause; from the sudden change of conduct in the same men, on the same subject, and that in so short a space of time.

He remembered, a very few years since, before France had publicly declared, when there were the most unequivocal proofs that she was secretly assisting America; that the constant answer made by the present ministers was, "it cannot be, for we continue to receive the most satisfactory assurances of not only their intention not to interfere in the dispute with America, or assist our American subjects in arms against

against us, but of friendship and good will." Nay, after the French cabinet began in part to develop their future intentions, by permitting their subjects to open a kind of commercial traffic, ministers continued to hold the same language; and finally, when the noble Lord in the green ribbon, then ambassador at the French court, sent home in his public capacity information of an actual treaty having been signed and solemnly ratified by the French king and the United States of America, ministers still affected to disbelieve it. They refused to give it the least degree of credit, though he was persuaded, if they were really serious, they must have been the only persons in Great Britain who entertained a single doubt of its existence: but that was not all; the treaty had been made for six weeks; and yet, in the interim, no step was taken in consequence; nor did ministers own that they knew any thing of the matter, though daily reminded and goaded in both Houses of Parliament, till the very day that the Count de Noailles, the French minister, delivered the rescript to a noble Viscount (Weymouth) then Secretary of State.

Here was the contrasted conduct of ministers upon similar occasions; not that they could be justly deemed so; for one was their conduct towards a natural enemy and rival power, the other towards an ancient ally; neither was it similar in other respects, for though ministers had the most direct proofs, not of the intentions of what France meant to do, but what she had already actually done, no notice was taken of it; whereas ministers, not having a tittle of proof of any kind, on the present occasion, of what Holland had already done, or meant to do, but waited in the former instance till France declared, by the mouth of her ambassador, the steps she had taken; and now refused the States-General a few days to consider, as it might be fairly presumed, of the proper mode of giving the satisfaction desired, and of the means of doing it effectually.

He recollected another instance of the conduct of the present ministry, which corresponded with that towards France, and was directly contrary to the spirit and principle of the present measure. The noble Lord who now presides at the Admiralty Board (Lord Sandwich) was not at the time in the same office, but he nevertheless approved of it, in another capacity (Secretary of State) he meant the conduct of Spain in respect of Falkland's Island, when the captain of a Spanish frigate had the unheard-of insolence to take off the rud-

der of a British man of war ; so atrocious an insult, as in the opinion of a celebrated naval officer, since deceased (Sir Charles Saunders) as to fully justify this country in attacking the ports, harbours, and naval arsenals of Spain ; and, if it could be effected, of even laying Madrid in ashes. Was not this an aggression of the highest and most aggravated nature ? and yet, how was it possible to patiently listen to the very same men, and their friends, who tamely put up with such an outrage upon the dignity of the nation, and the honour of the British flag, now recommending to plunge their country into a war with a power allied by treaty, and connected by the dearest reciprocity of interest, and mutual preservation and support, at a time too, when we are contending with the united force of the House of Bourbon, and one third of our own subjects armed and eventually consecrated, for our total ruin, if not annihilation, as a sovereign and independent state.

There was another circumstance, if possible, to heighten the folly, and which aggravated the impolicy of the act, that the conduct of the States General was condemned in the lump, and sentence passed upon them without hearing what they had to urge in point of fact, or declare in point of intention. How could we pronounce, for a certainty, that the States-General had the least intimation of the treaty which ministers had so confidently laid at their door ? Was it not much more probable that they had not, as after a period of almost two years and an halt, for aught that appeared, or was even pretended, not a single vestige of it could be traced. Was it not, if probability were to govern, more likely that the parties who devised and framed this project, seeing no prospect of giving it effect, had cautiously concealed it ; or even supposing the worst, that the governing power in Holland might have come to the knowledge of such a treaty, they had suppressed it in embryo, and passed the affair over in silence, from politic and prudential motives ? Be this, however, as it may, taking the affair in any light, but as a treaty approved and ratified by the States General of the Seven United Provinces, he was clearly of opinion that the war was impolitic, and, he was persuaded, unjust. Such being his sentiments, he should be for postponing the address, and giving his affirmative for the motion made by his noble friend, in order to satisfy their Lordships of the injustice of a measure, which might in its consequences involve such vast numbers of innocent persons in the loss of their properties and their lives.

The

The Earl of *Coventry* confirmed several observations made by the noble Lord who spoke last. He attributed all our public misfortunes to the weak or mistaken policy in the first instance, that of attempting to make laws for governing America against their own consent; endeavouring to give effect to those laws by means of coercion; and lastly, to the madness of expecting to subdue the vast continent of America by force of arms. This unhappy, this fatal war, was pregnant with misfortune, and, if not speedily put an end to, he made no doubt would still continue to bring with it daily embarrassments. He never, from the earliest commencement of this business, entertained a second opinion on the subject. America, if retained at all, he thought must be retained merely upon the title of popular consent, upon mutual confidence and affection, and the government of the parent state be recognized by the only ground on which government can rest with safety, that is, general approbation. However prejudice might warp, and zeal mislead, it must be evident to any person who could divest himself a moment of them, that America could never continue under the dominion of the British government a moment longer than sentiment, affection, and political interest bound her; and even if our dominion could be maintained by force, it would be little less destructive to this country than actual separation; because it would be but of a temporary continuance, and must at no very distant period give way to the real wishes and power of the people.

He should not go at large into the question, further than just to observe, conformably to the measure proposed to their Lordships, and to the laws and usages acknowledged and established by sovereign and independent states, that he doubted much of the justice of the war unless ministers had more full and relative information, and would consent to communicate it to their Lordships; and he was much more confirmed in his opinion that it might be so, when he coupled the policy with the justice of the measure. He would not retribute on those persons who supposed, that every noble Lord on the side of the House he sat, opposed the measures of the present set of ministers from improper motives. He hoped his conduct was such, though his opposition had been uniform, as to exempt him from consciously applying any part of the imputation to himself; but whatever interpretation might be put on his conduct, when he expressed his disapprobation of the present measure, it was to him a matter of great indifference; he assured the noble Lords that he trembled for the consequences

Earl of
Coventry.

when he considered the enormous amount of our debt, the immensity of our taxes, their extreme pressure upon the lower orders and laborious part of the community, and the further burthens which must continue to increase and accumulate, so long as the war should last.

He had lately passed several weeks in the country, and had not been quite inattentive to the state of the class of men whom he mentioned; and it was with grief he beheld the fatal effects of the present ruinous and destructive war. The county in which he resided [Worcester] was a great manufacturing country; and it was almost incredible to believe what vast numbers were out of employment, in a starving condition, or obliged to apply to the parish for relief. The evil was not confined to the lower order of the people; it had reached of course the farmer and manufacturer, and at length made its way to the land owner and country gentleman. Land had decreased nearly one half in value since the present war; new taxes were laid on each successive year in an inverse proportion; and though the latter description were still able to keep up appearances, it was only by discontinuing many of those expences which arose from their situation and rank in life; but when with a debt of almost two hundred millions, and an annual interest payable on it of seven millions, fourteen or fifteen millions new debt was to be incurred this year, and so in proportion, so long as the war should continue—the idea was indeed terrible! He therefore was justified in concluding, when further taxes came to be laid, and still further provisions for debts to be hereafter incurred were added, that the ruin which such an accumulation of burthen would produce would become universal: and that want and distress, which had hitherto only affected the lower class of people, would soon extend itself to all ranks and degrees; for the time was swift approaching, and must inevitably take place, when the lands of England would be mortgaged to the public creditors for full one half of their real value!

He had dwelt upon those circumstances in order to shew the strong motives ministers had to act with the greatest caution and circumspection in respect to the present measure; and how much it was their duty, when deciding on the justice of the war, to take likewise into consideration the expediency of it—to weigh the provocation against the consequences, and make an estimate from every motive which the internal state of the country, as well as our situation in respect of our foreign enemies might suggest, and see whether a line might not be chalked out between a tame acquiescence, and an act
of

of political despair, which appeared to him, the instant he was speaking, to lead to greater and more fatal evils than perhaps were ever before experienced by any other nation.

He most sincerely believed, that it was not merely the incapacity of ministers, or any sinister motives, which could have induced them to take this last precipitate step. It was directly repugnant to the established system on which they had hitherto acted towards foreign powers. It was in his understanding an act of political desperation, or, like the undone gamester, hazarding all upon a single dye: he meant, unless some favourable circumstances were held back, which from prudence or other reasons it might not be prudent to reveal.

Uninformed of the motives on which ministers acted, he could only judge from appearances, and upon that evidence he was free to say, that they stood in a great measure exculpated in his eyes, for he could only consider them as instruments acting in a state of infatuation, under the influence or decree of Divine Providence, in order to scourge a devoted land; but under whatever influence they might have acted, he sincerely wished, that those who were supposed not to be under any such impulse, would call for the information necessary to satisfy the House of the fact stated in the message, that the manifesto arose out of necessity; and that to three most formidable and powerful enemies, we had been unfortunately compelled to call a fourth against us into the field.

The Earl of *Fauconberg* complained much of the language which was predominant in one part of that House, and which imputed corrupt motives indiscriminately to such of their Lordships as supported the measures of government. It was a charge easily made, and with difficulty refuted. In his opinion, the contrary approached nearer the truth; and that those who opposed government, opposed it with a view to get into place. At all events, he could answer, so far as the accusation might be supposed to affect himself, that he was above being bribed or corrupted. His fortune was ample, and put him out of the power of temptation; and he could safely affirm, that it was not the emoluments arising from the places which he held [a lord of the bed-chamber and colonel of a new raised regiment] that induced him to accept of them, but the honour of serving his Sovereign, whose person he loved, and whose virtues he revered. One of the trusts he held was of a military nature, and, he believed, those who knew any thing of him, or about that transaction, could not imagine that he was induced to accept of it from motives of profit or

Earl of
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with a view of emolument. He assured their Lordships, that his motives originated from another source. When France, allied with our rebellious subjects, threatened an invasion, he thought that his loyalty to his Prince and love of his country called upon him to offer his services. He did offer them, and they were graciously accepted; and he valued his present situation much more on account of the affection he bore his Majesty, than from any advantage he could possibly derive from it. He protested sincerely, for one, if it could be so settled in general, that he would very cheerfully surrender what he received to the uses of the state. As he was disposed to believe, that much of the opposition made to public measures, arose more against the proposers of them, on account of the emoluments which they enjoyed, than the measures themselves, he would gladly resign what he enjoyed to the clamorous and discontented, in order to purchase unanimity and concord.

He thought it became the duty of every loyal subject and friend to his country to stand forth at this alarming crisis; against both our foreign and domestic enemies; against all new-fangled opinions relative to ideal schemes of political reformation, which tended merely to create and nourish discontents, innovations which, if permitted or encouraged, would end, he feared, in national distraction and public confusion.

Earl of
Shelburne

Earl of *Shelburne* (Lord Wycombe) rose and said he arrived in town but the night before, and nothing but the immense magnitude of the question under their Lordships' consideration could have induced him to come down to the House that day. He had long determined to absent himself from his attendance there, because he was convinced it was out of his power to render his country any essential service, as public affairs now stood, and as government was conducted. If his attendance that day had not struck him, as a superior call of duty, which could not on motives of honour and conscience be dispensed with; he assured their Lordships, had he staid away, he would have been furnished with a very cogent apology, namely, his having been attacked in the country, with a violent illness; and he feared that in the course of the observations he was about to make, that circumstance would prevent him from giving the degree of attention which a subject of so much importance necessarily demanded.

He had, on former occasions, at several times, particularly towards the conclusion of the last session, resolved to give their Lordships and himself no further trouble respecting the misconduct

misconduct of ministers, and the fatal effects of the measures which they had from time to time recommended to that House; he had hitherto faithfully kept his word, and would hereafter continue as faithfully to adhere to it. But a Dutch war! a war with Holland! as soon as it reached his ears, filled him with amazement. — What, a war with Holland! with our ancient allies and natural friends! whose efforts and connections, for more than a century, have proved the chief security of both states! their surest and best safeguard? A war between those powers, who, while united, not only supported their own independence, but the liberty and independence of all Europe—the great preservers of the balance of power: A rupture between two states thus circumstanced, and thus allied, he could hardly give credit to; and when he did, it only served to fill his breast with a mixture of grief and astonishment! He benumbed all the faculties of his mind, and in its first effects, left no other impression there but wonder and amazement!

He assured their Lordships, that he did not now rise to condemn ministers, or to point out the folly and incapacity which marked so strongly every single feature of their public conduct since our unhappy rupture with America. He could have no personal ill will to them; on the contrary, there were some among them for whom he entertained great respect; neither did he wish, as had been mentioned by a noble Earl, (Bathurst) early in the debate, and by more than one noble Lord in the course of it, to succeed to any one of their situations. The responsibility and labour annexed to such situations rendered a succession neither desirable nor enviable, in his apprehension, at any time; but at such a period as the present, that man's mind must be strangely framed indeed, who, upon any pretence or temptation, could be induced to accept of any high or responsible office, when he must be convinced, that the happiest union of talents, integrity, and popular confidence, aided by the utmost vigour of mind and laborious industry, had not, even in imagination, any thing on which it could securely rest; and when the most sanguine hopes and warmest expectations must build their proposed success more upon chance and a succession of fortunate events, than from a consciousness of real abilities, strengthened by national co-operation and united councils. But his wish to succeed to any of the present ministers was out of the question. Ministers knew it, and of course they would not deny

deny it; they need not be told, that nothing could tempt him into so embarrassing and perplexing a situation.

A Dutch War, he confessed, called him once more, and he believed for the last time, to that House; and while he was full of the strongest emotions that he ever felt upon any occasion of the kind, he found himself almost totally unable to proceed. The idea was immense, and the subject much beyond his grasp; he could take a view of this or that particular part of it; but when the subject presented itself together, it filled his mind in the same manner that he felt when he contemplated the national debt. He, or any of their Lordships, could easily measure in their minds a few thousand pounds; more might be added, and computation might be pushed to a certain length; but when it is known that the national debt was swiftly approaching to the enormous sum of two hundred millions, the mind became bewildered and clouded; even the powers of imagination failed; it resembled infinity of space, or infinity of duration, which only serves to produce doubt and uncertainty; so it was respecting the Dutch war; reflection was at an end; investigation had nothing to examine. The more attentively it was considered, the less it was understood; and when the probable consequences it would produce presented themselves, it led into an ocean of doubt, alarm, apprehension, and mental distraction.

His Lordship, in a general reply to what had been thrown out respecting party, said, that he wished not to be included in any such distinction. He neither was bred or trained up in party principles, nor had ever listed in any. He carefully avoided it, because he knew it would answer no good end; and experience had convinced him that he acted right. But it was ridiculous to suppose that there was any such thing as party now existing.—There was not.—There were numbers of persons in both Houses in opposition; but the result did not constitute a party.—Opposition was composed of a great number of petty squads of individuals; but their conduct, if it aimed at any thing, had defeated the very purposes of an effectual opposition; and whenever they seemed to unite in opinion upon any important question, their attempts had always, and ever would, be ventured to predict, miscarry. It was in vain to oppose the measures of administration; the Crown had gained an irresistible influence, which bore down every thing before it; the people and Parliament had acquiesced, or, if any effort was made to

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stem it, it only served to prove the folly of the attempt and that every struggle answered no other purpose but to augment that influence it was set on foot to correct and prescribe limits to; the consequence of which was, on the part of those who stood forth in opposition to government, that they were deemed criminal because they proved unsuccessful; they were publicly abused, and privately traduced; and even were disappointed of that species of consolation which every man, more or less, looks for, when he contends for the rights and welfare of his fellow-citizens, and by being held up by their opponents as the secret or avowed enemies of their country, and the factious and interested opposers of the King and his measures, had the additional mortification of being rendered, in some measure, unpopular. His full persuasion that this was the effect of the ineffectual struggle he had been for many years engaged in, was, he sincerely declared, his sole reason for absenting himself from his duty in that House. He had made up his mind the last day he had the honour of addressing their Lordships on the subject; nor had he any reason since to depart from that resolution. He trusted that his friends would think it a sufficient one; if it should not appear to them in that light, he would have the consolation, that it brought the most full and perfect conviction home to his own mind.

The conduct which he had prescribed to himself this day, was by no means a departure from the rule above-mentioned. He attended now as a Privy Counsellor in the great hereditary council of the nation, to offer advice to his Sovereign, at a moment of national peril and distress. He had consulted no person, and was acquainted with the sentiments of only a very few. He knew his own, however, and would declare them fairly, openly, and without disguise, or without the least regard to those of any other man. Before he ventured into detail, or the proofs on which he had founded his opinion, the general result of what he had learned, or could discover, was, that we should instantly suppress the manifesto, and endeavour immediately to return once more into a state of amity and alliance with the republic of Holland.

His Lordship then proceeded to discuss the question on the grounds of justice and political expediency. In respect to the former, he contended that the conduct of administration was perhaps the most extraordinary that ever entered into the mind of man. The treaty signed by the pensionary Van

Berkel was no more than a project to be hereafter entered into, and was besides conditional, or contingent. It was only to have effect upon a future event: namely, if the confederated States of America should hereafter be declared independent by the powers of Europe; but though it had been authenticated and confirmed by the States General of the United Provinces, it could not in any light be considered as an aggression, at least such an aggression as would justify the commencement of hostilities on our part. There were besides some other circumstances which rendered the paper much less offensive, for it was after Parliament had offered terms very little short of American independency; and when the separate propositions of one of the American Commissioners were added (Governor Johnstone) which propositions, though denied in argument, or explained away, were never disowned by ministers in direct terms, the whole amounted, with what Parliament had offered, to a state little short of absolute independence, so far as the sovereignty of the British legislature was concerned. But the main and only true question on which the measure of hostility was to rest, or be supported, was this: Was the treaty signed by Van Berkel and Mr. Lee, the Congress delegate, binding on the States General, and America, or either? If it was not, then he was authorised to say, that the treaty was not an act for which the governing power in Holland was strictly, generally, or equitably responsible.

Another consideration he begged leave to press upon their Lordships' mind, which he hoped would meet with that degree of attention it seemed to him to merit. He would suppose the utmost that was stated; he would suppose that the States General knew of the treaty even before the transaction was communicated by Sir Joseph Yorke at the Hague; and still further, that the postponing the complaint *ad referendum*, was either a denial of satisfaction, or something bordering upon it. This he would take to be the utmost point ministers could stretch, what they had been pleased to make his Majesty assent was an aggression on the part of Holland. He would not suppose it; he would take it for granted, because it was so stated in the manifesto on the table, the only authority upon which their Lordships were desired to vote the address. Were, then, ministers as ignorant of the constitution of Holland as they were of every thing else which related to foreign affairs? Were they sure that it was in the power of the States General to give redress, much less punish the supposed delinquents? Were they so uninformed as not

to know that the States General could not at all take cognizance of the affair, without consult and deliberation? It seems they were. He would tell them, imperfectly acquainted as he was with the constitution of the Dutch republic, that it was not competent for the States General, in their deliberative capacity, to exercise an act of sovereign power over any one of the other provinces, much less to overturn their municipal rights, or violate the laws. He believed the fact was notoriously known; at least history and experience, in a great variety of instances, confirmed it. It was notorious that some of the subjects of the republic sold powder and military stores to the French during the siege of Bergen-op-zoom, the celebrated siege in the war before the last (a town that was the acknowledged key of their own dominions) and thereby enabled the enemy to take it: it was no less so that they were frequently detected in the same illicit traffic in the West Indies, upon other occasions, when they supplied the ships of their own and our enemies from St. Eustatia, and even at sea. But probably ministers forgot that Holland was a state composed of merchants, whose great view was to promote and extend their commerce, and that acts, which in other countries would be deemed of a very heinous and punishable nature, were considered in Holland but mere venial offences: even allowing the contrary, his argument held equally good, as to the point of aggression; that it was not in the power of the States General to give a clear and specific answer to Sir Joseph Yorke's memorial; nor even give a promise to punish or redress any grievance which might have been occasioned by the conduct of a person or persons amenable to the provincial states of Holland only, and exclusively answerable to the local tribunals within that particular jurisdiction.

The noble Lord in the green ribbon had talked of the Duke of Marlborough, and that great and magnanimous Prince, King William, on whom he had bestowed such just eulogiums, and ventured to answer for them, that if they had been now alive they would act precisely as the present ministers had done. He denied the assertion to be founded, and spoke, he presumed, upon as good an authority as that of the noble Lord, upon the authority of history—of what had really happened, not upon what might probably have happened.

In the first place, he would contend, that the Prince of Orange, as King of England, would never have broke with Holland, or have disunited a conjunction of power, which

was the only barrier for the support of the Protestant religion, and the preservation of the liberties, or balance of power, in Europe, against the encroachments and alarming ambition of Lewis the XIVth, or now of the House of Bourbon. On the contrary, that great Prince, as King of England, and while Prince of Orange, conceived the interests of Great Britain and Holland to be the same. He carried this idea to its fullest extent, and all the real friends of both countries united in the same opinion. Since the first establishment of the republic, in the reign of that glorious and wise Princess Queen Elizabeth, this continued the prevailing idea in the British councils; unless in a few instances, when the exception explained itself—he meant the contest between England in the time of the Protectorate and Holland; and the two Dutch wars, in the reign of Charles the Second. Cromwell, it was well understood, knew little of foreign politics, and besides was led to connect himself with France, in order to support his usurpation. The wars in the reign of Charles the Second originated in the court, and from motives in which the nation had very little to do, unless it was to plunder both Holland and England, seizing the Dutch property, and diverting the public grants to private purposes. The present measure, he was persuaded, originated likewise from the court, and though probably not from the like motives, from others no less absurd, destructive, and disgraceful to the nation, as he should hereafter endeavour to demonstrate. On this ground he was supported by historical evidence to assert, that it had been the policy of the most able and honest statesmen this country ever boasted of, to cultivate not only alliances, and to form connections with Holland, but indeed the most inward confidence and friendship.

The noble Lord in the green ribbon, when he spoke of what Marlborough and King William would now do, seemed to be totally ignorant of what they had done. The Prince, though King of England, and Stadtholder, was repeatedly informed, that several of the subjects of the United Provinces corresponded with his enemies, and supplied France secretly with military stores for carrying on the war. He had evidence of it from their written correspondence, on various occasions. He complained in his double capacity, as King and Stadtholder, but was obliged to sit down contented, without obtaining redress: nay, more, he once got a packet into his hands directed to some of the principal traitors, who were burgomasters, and was obliged, in his magistral

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character, to lay it unopened before the States General, who, after the fullest evidence of the fact, suffered the whole to pass away unnoticed, without even censure, much less punishment or public disavowal. At this time, nevertheless Great Britain and Holland were contending for their all, their respective religions and liberties, against Louis the XIVth, then in the zenith of his glory. When, therefore, noble Lords talked of satisfaction, punishment, disavowals, &c. he could not help smiling, particularly when this language was supported upon the great names of Orange and Marlborough, the latter of whom, as well as the former, while he was pulling down the formidable and alarming power of Louis the XIVth, and procuring a barrier for Holland, was well apprized that many of the subjects of that republic were concerned in transactions, which, in the language of the royal manifesto, the message, the proposed address, and the noble Viscount who moved it, would have been deemed an aggression sufficient to justify a declaration of war; yet the latter, that immortal hero, Marlborough, was so pusillanimous and wretched a politician as to continue to beat, year after year, the armies of France, and to fight the battles of a nation of secret traitors, and unprincipled republicans!!!

On the other part, the injustice of the commencing hostilities, he was no less full and explicit. He said it would root the deeper the encreasing jealousy, and confirm the general odium which had prevailed all over Europe, on account of our conduct towards France, previous to the declaration of the last war; proofs of which he was witness to when he travelled on the continent, in innumerable instances. He was, it is true, well received by certain persons, but whenever the steps taken in respect of the seizure of the French ships happened to be mentioned, it was either condemned in the strongest and most pointed terms, or, if people remained silent, a mixture of horror and indignation seemed to be apparently painted on their countenances. At a later period indeed, when the brilliancy and rapid succession of our victories and successes raised the name of Briton to the highest pinnacle of fame and military glory, they dazzled the eyes of the multitude, and in some measure sanctified the means by the end: but even then, when men reasoned, he could perceive either in the words or actions of those he mixed with, a secret, or public disapprobation, indeed, of detestation of the first beginnings of that war. All Europe was hurt
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and alarmed; we were called a nation of pirates and public plunderers; and it created, he was persuaded, the seeds of that jealousy, the unhappy fruits of which have been the principal cause that one half of Europe are in arms against us, and the other half remain inactive, and express a kind of silent pleasure at our approaching downfall.

But what was the conduct which created the jealousy, indignation, and secret ill-will, which he had been describing? Nothg, when compared with that which ministers had now advised their Sovereign to adopt—though war had not been formally declared against France, hostilities had commenced in the eastern and western world—[In the East Indies in 1753, and in the back part of Virginia in 1754, where Washington, then a Major of a Virginia militia regiment, with some regulars, to the amount of 300, were made prisoners.]—Yet so careful was the British cabinet not to give cause of complaint or jealousy to the neutral powers, that they ordered the ships and cargoes to be laid up and preserved, or where the commodities were perishable, to be sold and held till the end of the war, for the benefit of the respective owners, which intention was afterwards faithfully and punctually carried into execution.

This was the measured, cautious, and equitable conduct of the wise and honest ministry of George the Second. Now for a minute compare and contrast it with that of their present successors. In a time of the most profound peace between the two states, allied by treaty, friendship, and common interest, without any hostile appearance or preparation on the part of Holland; in the midst of the most perfect security and confidence, as well upon the faith of subsisting treaties, as under the universal and established customs current among, and acknowledged by, every civilized nation on the face of the earth; upon an uncertainty at the best, and so far as appears, upon the most shameful pretext imaginable, what has been the decision of the British cabinet? To seize all Dutch ships, whether of private or public property; whether under commercial protection, or drove in by stress of weather, or the threatened destruction of the elements:—and what next?—It may be supposed to compel justice, if withheld; to procure satisfaction for some insult; to indemnify our own subjects; and to retain the property thus seized and withheld till the object, whatever it might be, should be attained.—By no means:—but to the disgrace of the country, to the total dishonour of its councils, and in direct
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violation of all laws, whether of nations, of nature, of public honour, and private faith, the ships and cargoes are seized, not to be retained, but confiscated for the joint advantage of the captors and the state; and what is worse than all, a commandment given to render the municipal tribunals the instrument of legalizing an act, which is equally repugnant to every law now existing in the written codes, current, or of authority, throughout Europe.

His Lordship, after pressing this point with great strength of argument and in a most rapid flow of language, observed, that besides the injustice of the act, as a matter of state, it was a manifest imposition on the whole nation, and seducing the public upon two grounds, equally injurious to the honour of the nation and its interests. It tended to mislead the public, by inflaming it with ill-founded resentments; and to gain the approbation of individuals, with a prospect of acquiring property to which they had no title, but what was founded in force and plunder.

But as he said when he first rose, that we ought, in his opinion, to endeavour to tread back the steps which led us into our present situation, and at all events seek to effect a reconciliation, so he was clearly of opinion that it was not yet too late. An opening, and a favourable one, still presented itself, if the newspapers were to be depended upon, which was the only species of information the noble Viscount seemed willing to give their Lordships;—It was all their Lordships were likely to have;—it was all the information he had himself—The province of Zealand, as stated in the Dutch Gazette, declared a desire of peace, and hoped it was not too late, but might be yet effected. It was the duty of ministers to improve that disposition towards reconciliation. He doubted not but it was still practicable; and as the only prospect of procuring the salvation of this country, and relieving it from the insurmountable difficulties which surrounded it on every side, he earnestly recommended it to their most serious attention. There was, it was true, one great impediment which stood in the way, and which the folly and precipitation of ministers had been the cause of. So far the scheme had answered the purposes it was intended to serve: the Dutch were called traitors and secret enemies, in order to bring upon them the public odium; the dignity and honour of the crown described as being openly wounded; the salvation of the state, say ministers, is deeply interested in the most sudden and decisive exertions against our new enemies; and to
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give the whole the more certain success, individuals are called upon and invited to share in the plunder; their fortunes are to be made by the ruin of an innocent people, and that merely on account of the particular conduct of a few factious persons. The alarm is struck, the sound is instantly conveyed to every part and corner of the kingdom, and the people are conjured to concur and assist in the general proposed destruction of a misrepresented people. Ministers, like the parsons on the sea-coasts, piously point out the booty; one party are detached here, another there, a third by a particular path, and all exhorted to repair to the wreck, in order to partake of the plunder. No person waiting or hesitating to assist in the general ruin, or making it a case of conscience.

The impediment which stood in the way of reconciliation, and to which he alluded, arose from the impolicy as well as injustice of the measure—that was issuing letters of marque and reprisals; and of course ordering the Dutch property to be confiscated. This, he was ready to confess, would throw a strong bar in the way of amicable adjustment; because the public faith of the nation was pledged to the private captors, and a property vested in them by law, which could not now be reclaimed, upon any other condition short of giving them an equivalent.—Be that however as it might, so great was the object, in his mind, of an immediate reconciliation with the republic of Holland, that though the difficulties were greater than they seemed to be, and the expence of redeeming the prizes already made, by giving satisfaction to the captors, were double, nay treble what it was; he was clearly of opinion, that no step, industry, or management, should be left untried, in order to regain if possible the friendship and alliance of Holland, or at all events to promote a friendly neutrality.

In the course of his Lordship's argument, he observed, that sovereign states were extremely ignorant of the municipal laws and internal regulations which prevailed in other governments; and particularly so in respect of Great Britain and Holland, the latter of which was notoriously known to be the most intricate and complicated in its movements that ever existed.—He recollected an instance, which happened to himself, when he had the honour of serving his Majesty in an high office. [Secretary of State for the southern department] It was in the case of the Spanish Jesuits, who were supposed to possess a very considerable property in our funds, which their sovereign, when he had dissolved that order,

order, and confiscated their property within his dominions, wished to seize.—The Spanish minister made repeated applications to him on the subject, by the direction of the King his master.—He was astonished at the request, and endeavoured to convince him of the total impracticability of complying with it; the constitution would not permit it, for the laws were so strong and specific against it, that even the property of a traitor could not be attacked in the manner desired.—But all his endeavours were in vain. The ambassador (Prince Masserano) though an able and worthy man, could not be persuaded, but the court of Great Britain were favourably inclined to the Jesuits; and that we could have easily granted, what, upon motives of concealed policy, he presumed we had refused.

His Lordship having explained very fully his opinion relative to the injustice of commencing hostilities against the Dutch republic, considered the measure on the other ground, that of expediency; and it was here his Lordship, with his usual abilities and extensive information, entered into a comprehensive, though a brief and correct, view of the state of the nation.

He laid it down as a proposition, to which every noble Lord who heard him must assent, “that all the public misfortunes which the nation had already felt, and the many more which it was in all probability doomed to experience, were caused by the American war,” which war was the native offspring of ministerial ignorance, oblinacy, and want of political principle! It had for its immediate object the increasing the influence of the crown, and the power of the sovereign. It was conceived in ambition, it was nurtured by folly and rashness; it was founded in ideas totally subversive of the British constitution; it was unjust and wicked in the extreme; it was carried on with violence and want of prudence; and prosecuted in all its parts, with the most unrelenting and unheard of cruelties.

His Lordship confessed, in respect to the recovery of North America, he had been a very Quixote, and expected, because he most anxiously wished, that our colonies might be prevailed upon to return to their former state of connection with this country. He had indeed pushed his expectations further and longer, he believed, than any impartial person, informed of all the circumstances both here and in America, the present administration excepted, ever had;—but his hopes had long since vanished. He had waked from those

dreams of British dominion, and every important consequence which he flattered himself might be derived from them. But as in the course of what he might have urged in favour of those delusive hopes, and vain and idle expectations, some expressions of a loose, general, and indeterminate nature, might have fallen from him, he wished to be perfectly understood. Much as he valued America; necessary as the possession of the colonies might be to the power, glory, dignity, and independence of Great Britain; fatal as her final separation would prove, whenever that event might take place; as a friend to liberty, as a reverer of the English constitution, as a lover of natural and political justice—"he would be much better pleased to see America for ever severed from Great Britain, than restored to our possession by force of arms, or conquest." He loved his country; he admired its political institutions; but if her future greatness, power, and extent of dominion were only to be established and maintained on the ruins of the constitution, he would be infinitely better pleased to see this country a free one, though curtailed in power, wealth, &c. than possessing every thing the most sanguine expectation could picture to itself, if her greatness was to be purchased at the expence of her constitution and liberties.

To the injustice of the war, in every point of view in which he had considered it, his Lordship said he would descend to such particulars as appeared to him to apply to the present question, so far as it was a measure of expediency.

"Look at New-York; what has been done there? Nothing, or worse than nothing; the commander in chief hemmed in on New-York island, and its vicinities; not a single blow struck there for these three last campaigns, nor in that part of America, but the shameful retreat from Philadelphia, when the General escaped with his whole army, rather by chance and the misconduct of the enemy, than by the natural ability of the force under his command. Sir Henry Clinton is a brave and experienced officer; but Sir Henry Clinton cannot perform impossibilities. Three campaigns have passed away since, and nothing has been done but a few predatory excursions, which are a disgrace to the army, a disgrace to the counsels which have directed them, and, I may add, a disgrace to the whole English nation. Nay, instead of gaining any advantages, or making any conquest, Rhode-Island has been abandoned; and if report may be credited, the next measure will be that of abandoning New-York,

York, and then you will not have a foot of land but Carolina, and what prospect there is for retaining that, I shall, as I proceed a little further, take notice of. I have heard, from tolerable good authority, that New-York must be abandoned unless the requisition of the commander in chief be immediately complied with; and when I tell your Lordships what that requisition is, such of your Lordships as have not been informed of it will think with me, that the evacuation of New-York is unavoidable. Sir Henry Clinton has written home for ten thousand men, and has added, that he can not stay so as to answer any good purpose, if that reinforcement be not sent out to him early in the spring, nor, he fears, at all, if favourable circumstances should arise on the part of General Washington, such as loans, further succours from France, &c. Will ministers say that they are preparing to send out such a reinforcement? They know the contrary; they dare not;—they cannot. What, ten thousand men! I will venture to maintain, and am able to prove, and I say it in the hearing of the noble Lord in the red ribbon over the way (Lord Inherst) who if I am wrong has it in his power to contradict me, that to defend the whole island we have not above fifteen thousand men, exclusive of the militia. If then, added to the threats of France and Spain, who I have some reason to fear are meditating an attack on our coasts, we may expect a predatory war to be carried on by Holland against the eastern coasts of this kingdom; I believe it will need very little argument, and less oratory, to satisfy the noble Lords who hear me, that a length of near fifteen hundred miles of coast will call for the whole of this remnant of an army to defend it against the eventual incursions, debarkations, &c. which that very circumstance alone may suggest to our enemies; a circumstance which they are no strangers to, though I should not be surprised to hear some noble Lords rise, and with a very grave face accuse me of conveying improper intelligence to the enemy. There was indeed a time when an army to defend us against our enemies was in a manner useless to us. I mean when we were in possession of the dominion of the sea, when we could with perfect security spare the last foldier to conquer in every part of the globe. Will noble Lords tell me that that is the case now? No! I think not;—confident as ministers are, bold in his assertions as the noble Earl over the way, who presides at the head of the marine establishment, is, he will hardly hazard the assertion, when I say,

that the dominion, not of the ocean, but of the narrow seas, our own very channel, was lost, when the French took possession of it last summer was twelvemonth, and our flag for ever tarnished and disgraced, when our channel fleet took shelter in Portsmouth harbour, and secured itself by flight from a superior and pursuing enemy. What has been the disgrace which has lately happened? The noble Earl may take it either way. We were not in force to meet the enemy in the Bay, but permitted them to convoy one of the richest and most valuable trade fleets that ever entered into the ports of France, without so much as an attempt to interrupt them; or being superior to D'Estaing, our ministers, in their usual bungling, incapable manner, gave orders to the commander of the British squadron not to risque a battle.

“ This is a circumstance no less melancholy than disgraceful. I speak only from public report: administration are censurable at all events; if the news-papers may be depended on, which form the great source of intelligence recommended to your Lordships by the noble Viscount in the green ribbon (Stormont.)

“ Be these circumstances as they may, I believe there is not one of your Lordships who is not fully persuaded, that France and Spain, without Holland, are an over-match for us at sea; and consequently, that the defence of this island rests entirely upon the militia and the army—army, did I say? We have no army; our army in fact is ruined; it is indeed totally annihilated. The noble Lord in the red ribbon knows it; and if he opens his mouth at all on the subject, I contend must, and I dare say will, acknowledge it; and I will tell your Lordships why, and how it has been ruined. It is the raising new corps that has ruined it. The recruiting service is at an end; it is no more. Men cannot be had. Why so? The very means to augment it has been the cause; and the motive for adopting the measure of the new levies, a most infamous and destructive one, must stare every one of your Lordships in the face. What is it? subaltern officers, men who never saw service, and some of whom never handled a spontoon, are made field officers, or are promoted to regiments and battalions. The recruiting service is become a downright money transaction; a mere piece of brokerage! A person who has interest with the minister, undertakes to raise a certain number of men. How does he do it? He purchases it—not for a specific sum;—No! he purchases it with a certain number of men; and he purchases them men again, at a most

a most exorbitant price : thus this new-dubbed colonel goes to market with a full purse, and outbids every man; buys every man whom he can tempt to enlist, no matter what his age, infirmities, or unfitness for service may be. If an officer recruiting for the old corps, in the regular established mode of service, comes in competition with the recruiting sergeants of these new corps, he stands not the least chance; he is laughed at. This is not all—the men are enlisted under the idea of staying within the kingdom. Ministers, ignorant and incapable as they are, know better than to trust the defence of the kingdom to such men. Arts are resorted to, and propositions made, and temptations held out to those soldiers to embark for foreign service. Attend then, my Lords: these new corps are sent, without either discipline or knowing the right end of a musket, to unhealthy climates, where they perish daily by hundreds. I have heard, from good authority, that out of one of the best of those regiments lately sent to Jamaica [supposed to mean Cary's corps] consisting of upwards of a thousand men, not more than 97 survived, or if alive, were fit to do duty. Another great inconvenience arising from this mode of recruiting is, that the old corps are thereby rendered totally ineffective, which has at length compelled the commander in chief to come to a regulation, that of reducing the companies to 56 men each; and yet, low as this establishment is, the old corps are considerably defective, and the army we have to defend us is composed chiefly of officers, which is exactly the reverse of the conduct of one of the greatest captains of this, or any other preceding age, the King of Prussia, who has no more than three commissioned officers to every hundred and fifty men. Besides the weakness of such an establishment, which ought to be the first object, it is a great additional expence; and at the conclusion of a peace, must be the means of loading the nation, and encreasing the half-pay list to an enormous amount.

“ I thought it not improper to point out to your Lordships the numerous evils which the mode adopted of raising new levies has been productive of, and shall now return: I say, that you have no fleet able to face your enemies. I maintain that you have no army even equal to the home defence; and I am authorised to conclude, from these premises, that America, even according to the ideas of ministers, is lost beyond even any thing resembling probable expectation, because you cannot spare the reinforcement thought necessary by the
commander

commander in chief for carrying on successful operations during the ensuing campaign.

“ But if the northern and middle parts of the colonies be abandoned, what prospect have you to the southward? A very poor one indeed! I know the officer who commands there; I love him; I admire him; I revere him. We have been old friends and brother soldiers. We served under the same great master at an early period of our lives [supposed to mean Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick]. I am sorry I cannot say that I profited much by that great officer's instructions or example. I know that Lord Cornwallis is no less zealous, than a brave, active, and judicious officer. My personal esteem for his Lordship makes me lament some things which have happened. I know that he is no less humane than brave; and I am therefore inclined to presume, that the cruelties and severities exercised in his name, and under his authority, never originated with him. I am persuaded his mind is of another texture; that he never could have acted upon his own judgement, when he licensed or authorised those severities; but he has been obliged to comply with the orders received from hence. It fills my mind with horror, and I tremble for the consequences, when I know the resentments and detestation it will create in the minds of the people of America; and, if possible, still more, when I reflect on the melancholy situation of those brave and gallant officers and soldiers, who, to all the necessary toils and perils of war, will be subject to fall victims to what their enemies will deem a just and necessary retaliation; just in its principle, and necessary in its object, in order to put an end to the wanton effusion of human blood.

“ But what is the situation of Lord Cornwallis? Why, after an exertion, which must do him infinite honour; after a combination of circumstances, improved by a series of conduct, which the greatest veteran officer might be proud of; he totally defeated the enemy. But what then? For want of force, he has been obliged ever since to act upon the defensive, instead of the offensive. A very considerable part of his army has been surprised, and the whole either taken prisoners, killed, or dispersed; so that by this time, in all probability, his Lordship has been compelled to retire to Charles-Town, and relinquish all the advantages which he had good reason to promise himself from the victory at Camden, or is waiting for reinforcements from New-York. This, in my opinion, is the state of your affairs in America; and by what I can learn from the news,

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papers, for I speak upon no better authority, the expedition under General Leslie has failed, or worse than failed; for though the General met with little or no opposition in Virginia, the manifest spirit and disposition of the inhabitants of that province portends something no less fatal than actual defeat. The people, I understand, fled on all sides for want of protection; but not a single person, after all the predictions of a noble Lord in the other House [supposed to mean Lord George Germain] came in under the royal standard, or claimed the benefit or protection held out by the proclamation. Taking therefore the whole of the American war, as connected with the present question, which, if I understand right, is the only pretence for the manifesto on your Lordships' table, I look upon America as already lost, as already irrecoverably lost!

“ The noble Viscount in the green ribbon has predicted many signal advantages which will be derived from the present rupture with Holland. He tells you that they will be stunned into their senses. I assure his Lordship that I much fear that they will. I fear that the Hollanders will feel the just sense they entertain of our unprovoked violence and piratical acts; for I shall never consider the captures made of their ships, in a time of profound peace, in any other light. I fear they will feel the most warm and well-founded resentments, and that those feelings will suggest the most vigorous and effectual means of resistance and retaliation. The noble Viscount builds mightily upon their unprepared state, on their inability to defend themselves, or act offensively. He says that their coasts and floating property are at our mercy; he says, that their subjects in the East and West-Indies are totally unapprized of the approaching rupture, and that they are of course naked and defenceless. I suspected the noble Lord to be as ignorant of the expediency of the war, as he seems to be totally mistaken respecting the justice of it. Does the noble Lord know what state of defence the Dutch possessions in the eastern and western world are? I think I may venture to assert, his Lordship knows exactly as much concerning that, as he does of the spirit and disposition of the people whom we are about to contend with. The Dutch, though a commercial, are nevertheless a brave and courageous people. They have ever opposed tyranny in every shape it has shewn itself, and perhaps in their first struggles against Spanish cruelty and Spanish oppression, manifested proofs of magnanimity, courage, and heroism, not surpassed if equalled by the most celebrated

celebrated and renowned nations of ancient or modern times. I need not deduce a series of facts, in confirmation of what I now assert: the history of the two Dutch wars in the reign of Charles II. affords sufficient proofs, not to mention many instances of a later date, during the reigns of King William and Queen Anne. The Dutch, it is true, are merchants, and sea-faring people by profession; but it is well known, that we have, as well as France, transformed them into seamen, and soldiers, when oppression and injustice rendered it necessary for them to bear up and resist their enemies and oppressors.

“The Dutch are still the same people; it is true they have all their war establishments to arrange and new model, that they want naval officers; but give me leave to say, not in the degree that persons uninformed may imagine: as I understand, that several officers of that nation are now in the service of some of the naval powers of Europe, and will of course be called home to defend their country; yet granting the argument of a want of experienced officers to be pushed to its greatest extent, what does it amount to? No more than a temporary want. Unless in the single instance of the short naval experience gained in the contest with this country during the Protectorate, the people of Holland had remained in a state of profound peace for more than half a century; yet when the war broke out in the year 1665 with England, there appeared no want of able officers and skilful commanders. The fact was, that almost every man in the commonwealth became a soldier or a seaman; nay, persons totally unfit, by habit and profession, stood forth and changed the gown for the sword. Among the rest, the great Cornelius De Witt took upon himself the command of a grand squadron, and fought one of the most bloody naval battles which happened during that war.

“The noble Lord, as I have observed before, supposes that the possessions of Holland must fall; but I cannot see by what means. If they should fall, they must surrender from choice, not necessity; for while France and Spain continue to remain masters in the European seas, the Dutch cannot possibly have any thing to fear at home, and I believe, as little out of Europe as in it. We have already too much business on our hands, and though we had fleets to spare, where are the troops necessary for the prosecuting offensive operations? The truth is, it is we, that ought to be alarmed for our possessions, not Holland for theirs; and should Hol-
land

land unite with France and Spain in attacking us in the East or West-Indies, I cannot see, instead of meditating conquest, how it will be possible for us to maintain our own dominions out of Europe."

His Lordship having very fully urged these points, in order to prove the inexpediency of the measure, shewing how unequal we were, even to cope with the enemies we had already to contend with, further maintained his general argument upon the probable conduct of the northern, or neutral powers, particularly the probable conduct of the Empress of Russia, who, he believed, would consider herself as bound by positive, or implied engagements, to assist Holland, thus treacherously attacked; not on account of a pretended treaty, not executed under any authority, nor ratified even by the authority under which it was framed, but really for having entered into a neutrality proposed by the Court of Petersburg to Holland, and the other powers of Europe not engaged in war. He should not be surprised to hear similar arguments to those used by the noble Viscount in the green ribbon, urged with all imaginable solemnity and confidence; "that it was not the interest of the Russian court to break with us; that it would be unjust and impolitic; that honesty was the best policy; that it would be madness in the Court of Petersburg to involve themselves wantonly in the quarrel; and to the last degree ungenerous in us, so much as to harbour such a suspicion, &c. &c." He remembered very well, not long since, to have heard the noble Viscount assign the same reasons exactly respecting Holland, at the very time, according to his Lordship's account of this day, they were actually entering into a treaty with our own subjects, as an independent sovereign state; after, as a noble Lord observed [Chesterfield] they had given protection to a rebel pirate [Jones]; after they had been assisting our subjects in open arms against our authority, with ammunition, stores, and all the implements of war. When this kind of reasoning,—when this stile of argument, which applied equally to no case, and every case was resorted to, he wished noble Lords to give it that degree of weight, attention, and credit, exactly which it deserved. He had heard, indeed, the noble Viscount make use of the same arguments before Spain declared. and before that period, in respect of France. He heard his Lordship do the same while Holland was acting the hostile and unfriendly part, which his Lordship had described in such strong and vehement terms, which, he said, so deservedly merited the most exemplary chastisement, and

which was the only colour of argument that could be opposed to the probability that Russia would eventually become an enemy in the present quarrel with Holland, as a member of the armed neutrality. But in this, as well as every other instance, in which the dignity, reputation, and most essential interests of the country were concerned, what were the documents to which their Lordships were referred? They were desired to trust and put their whole confidence and reliance upon—what?—upon the English news-papers and the Dutch gazettes? To answer ministers then upon their own authority—If either might be depended on, the Dutch had already acceded to the neutrality in due form, by their ministers sent to the Court of Peterburgh for that purpose; and the Empress in due form accepted of their accession. So that instead of France, Spain, America, and Holland, we should shortly have Russia, and in due time all the other members of the armed neutrality, to contend with, and of course every neutral naval power in Europe, Portugal excepted, combined or unnecessarily drove into measures which must, from the nature of such a confederate force employed against us, ultimately terminate in our total destruction, if not annihilation, as a sovereign independent state. Even Portugal began to shew a disposition extremely unfavourable to our interests, and he had good reason to believe she would, in the end, prove as inimical as the rest; a predicament hitherto unexampled in the history of mankind, that of not having a single port open to us from Gibraltar to the North Pole.

He perceived that the noble Viscount laid particular stress upon the treachery of Holland; that is, he took the matter relative to the treaty, upon presumption to be true, and afterwards drew conclusions from that presumption equally ill founded. He said, the Dutch had not only been guilty of an aggression, but that their ill conduct was highly aggravated, because they committed the act while they claimed the privileges annexed to a state of presumed alliance and friendship. To the fact he had already spoken; on the conclusion drawn from its supposed existence, he would just observe, that the alliance between this country and Holland was no more; it was vacated by the very persons who stated the act as a breach of faith. The present set of ministers had themselves declared the subsisting treaties between Great Britain and Holland to be dissolved by a paper delivered by Sir Joseph Yorke to the States General in the year 1779, and yet had the modesty to accuse Holland of a breach of treaty no longer in being.

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However light ministers might make of this formal renunciation, or artful they might be in their attempts to gloss it over, that circumstance might be productive of more serious consequences than they foresaw, or were willing to acknowledge. If Holland was free from her former engagements to Great Britain, most clearly she stood in respect of us as the other neutral powers of Europe did, which of course entitled her to form fresh engagements with any other power she pleased, or to accede to the armed neutrality for the protection of her commerce; consequently, if the universal report was true, that Holland had acceded, she would most certainly be entitled to every protection, security, and privilege enjoyed, or to be claimed by the rest of the contracting parties, namely, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark.

The Lord *Chancellor* (Lord *Thurlow*) rose as soon as the last noble speaker sat down, and observed, that it was by no means his intention to travel after the noble Lord through the very wide and extensive circle he had been pleased to describe—from Quebec to New-York, thence to Carolina; in short, over every foot of ground in North America, now under the immediate dominion of the British Crown, or which was withheld from us by force of arms by our foreign enemies, or rebellious subjects. He was as little disposed to trace the footsteps of the noble Lord nearer home, from Gibraltar to France, and so on to Holland, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, &c. If, however, in the course of what he had to submit to their Lordships, any point should strike him, or any circumstance recur to his mind in which he should have the misfortune to differ from the noble Earl, he would think it his duty to take notice of it. He was perfectly aware of his own insufficiency to contend with the noble Lord in the great line of politics. His studies had been directed another way. When, therefore, he found himself under a necessity, arising from conviction, to controvert the noble Lord's arguments, conclusions, or opinions, he should do it with that degree of diffidence which became a person under the predicament in which he must be supposed to stand; he would, nevertheless, declare his own sentiments fairly and without reserve, deeming it the first duty incumbent upon him, as well as every noble Lord who heard him, to speak or act upon those motives and reasons only which had brought home conviction to his own mind.

His Lordship observed, that the question which in the event of the present debate he would be called upon to put

to their Lordships, and which of course they would be called upon to decide, was simply this: "Whether the motion made by the noble Lord in the green ribbon, being a proposed address in answer to his Majesty's message; or the motion made by the noble Duke early in the evening, should first receive their Lordships' approbation?" This brought the point really and truly in discussion, in his opinion, within a very narrow compass; for most clearly it was in that shape, and that shape only, the question presented itself to their Lordships, however loaded and confounded it might have been with collateral and extraneous matter, or ably discussed by several noble Lords who had expressed their disapprobation of the question originally moved. To that point he should specifically direct what he had now to offer, reserving to himself whatever his own ideas might suggest, in reply, or observation upon many things which had fallen from those noble Lords in the course of the debate.

What then was the state of the question on this ground? His Majesty had sent a message by a noble Lord high in office, accompanied with certain papers. The former acquaints their Lordships, that his Majesty found it necessary to direct letters of marque and reprisal to be issued against the Dutch nation; the latter contains an account of certain transactions which passed between our minister at the Hague and the States General, which induced his Majesty to adopt that measure. Now in point of precedent he believed there was not a single instance in the records of Parliament in which any other matter was permitted to be introduced between the answer to a royal message and the determination of the House upon its contents. It appeared, as far as he could learn, and if he was mistaken he expected he should be set right, that no precedent of the kind existed to the contrary, but that the custom or usage of Parliament had at all times, and upon every occasion, given this decided preference to intimations, messages, and communications from the throne. Yet supposing that the present case was totally a new one, that from its nature, novelty, or importance, it was entitled to be taken out of the general rule, the arguments urged in favor of the exception he presumed should be sufficiently cogent and conclusive to shew that it came under that description.

This led him to the principal, nay the only ground or argument on which the noble Duke's motion was attempted to be maintained. It had been said that the documents on the
table

table were not such as justified the measure; consequently, that either other papers ought to be laid before the House, to satisfy their Lordships that the real facts and transactions justified the measure; or, that the message upon the documents submitted to the House was not such as entitled it to their Lordships' concurrence.

It would be very needless, he presumed, to press the answer to this mode of reasoning to its full extent, the usage being clearly against it; but the argument urged to induce the House to depart from this general rule is this; that the papers being deficient, the whole matter will ultimately be decided upon should their Lordships now content to agree to the address, and those noble Lords who disapprove of the measure, as grounded upon the letters on the table, will hereafter be for ever precluded, or barred from giving any opinion on the subject, being bound by the forms of Parliament to the approbation of the present measure, though not justified by the documents upon the table.

Were this the real case, he confessed, that the uniform acquiescence in messages from the throne, or rather the preference such messages always had in the contemplation of Parliament, would, on many accounts, prove extremely inconvenient, and be subversive of that expedient and wished-for unanimity, so necessary to the successfully conducting and carrying on the business of government. But he begged leave to say, that was not the case; nor did such approbation, as precedent had established respecting royal communications, bind in substance such noble Lords as were only bound in form, and who had acquiesced merely in compliance with the customary mode of parliamentary proceeding; for every noble Lord who thought the information on the table defective or incomplete, relative to the justice or expediency of the measure, would be as much at liberty to move for further information, as if he had never given a vote on the subject. He would neither be precluded nor bound by his vote of this day, but might, as soon as the present question was disposed of, or at any future or more fit or convenient time, rise and move for any papers he thought proper.

On the ground, therefore, of established usage and uninterrupted precedent, he should most certainly be against letting in the motion made by the noble Duke, in order to give it a preference to an address moved in answer to a royal message. It was a respect due to the crown which had never been

been refused. In another point of view it amounted to a negative; it was a motion to postpone in the first instance, in the way of a previous question, if he understood it right, and, in fact, might be considered as a refusal on the part of their Lordships; for certainly, if the noble Duke's question should be carried, it would imply, or directly import a degree of censure on the measure. It would amount to this; that his Majesty had exercised his prerogative of declaring war without just cause; or if he had a just cause, had declined to inform their Lordships of his real motives; either of which, in his opinion, would have been extremely indecent and improper.

When he made use of his Majesty's name, he wished to be understood as holding the language of Parliament and the constitution. Whatever steps had been taken, could be only imputed to his ministers. They were their acts for which they were responsible, and by which they alone must abide. Nevertheless, though they were liable to be called to an account at a future time, and in a proper manner, the conducting of the affairs of government made it absolutely necessary that the trust committed to their care should be presumed to have been faithfully and properly discharged, till the contrary were proved: besides, it would be impossible to conduct the affairs of the nation for a single day, if the advisers of the crown were to be employed in defending their conduct at the very instant it was announced. The crown, it was acknowledged, had the power of declaring peace and war; so far its advisers had acted under authority respecting the present measure; if that power had been unskillfully or corruptly exercised, those who had advised his Majesty would be still as amenable to the judgement and censure of Parliament, if they should be found to deserve it, as if no such vote as that proposed by the noble Viscount had ever received the approbation of the House.

His Lordship having argued this point very ably, which, in his opinion, was clearly decisive of the question immediately before the House, said, that he thought it his duty to take notice of several matters which had been strenuously urged by some noble Lords near him.

He observed, with much pain, that noble Lords, not contented with condemning the measures of administration as they were supposed to affect the interests of the nation, had industriously called their capacity into question, mixing, at the same time, strong personal allusions relative to their sup-

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posed want of integrity, as well as talents; and in fine, upon many occasions general and specific, imputing their conduct to motives originating equally in weakness and wickedness. They did not even stop short there in their personal investive attacks; they confounded and transferred the presumed delinquency of individuals to government itself. 'The government was upheld by corruption; the measures advised by ministers were wicked and unjust.' A necessary resistance to the insidious attempts of our enemies was branded with the odious names of piracy, robbery, rapine, and public plunder. He was sorry to hear such language in that House; he felt most disagreeably, upon a variety of accounts, which he should just slightly mention, and upon none more than the notorious indecency of such expressions. He ever thought, and ever should continue to think, that even independent of the established order of their Lordships' proceedings, that no language ought to be used in that House, but what might pass current among any other society of gentlemen; and it hurt him greatly when he saw that rule departed from. These general investives, no matter from which side of the House they came, had a particular evil tendency; they were productive of bad example, and he believed those who used them frequently felt the inconveniencies resulting from them, being free to declare, that he believed they were in general ill-founded, on which side soever they came, or to which side soever they were applied: and he once for all appealed to the noble Lords themselves, whether they were not conscious of the injustice of the imputations thus thrown out? He would upon this head just add, that he hoped noble Lords near him would give him credit, when he disclaimed any intention of a partial application of the remark:—he made it with no such intention, he wished the observation to apply indiscriminately for the purpose of reaching every part of the House, or not at all; for he solemnly protested, that he thought the abuses daily thrown out upon them without doors, were equally false and ill-founded with those to which custom had given a kind of sanction within—He hoped therefore, as well in regard of the high rank they bore in the state, and the respect which was due from each individual Lord to the other, as for the sake of example, that noble Lords would abstain from every thing which bordered on a stile of asperity and accusation, and from criminary and recriminatory expressions, which, while they tended to disgrace and lessen the weight and dignity of their Lordships' deliberations, held

held out an encouragement to the lower orders of the people to transgress in the same manner.

Government, said some noble Lords, is upheld by corruption. To say no worse, this was not a language fit to be held in that House, because the majority of that House hitherto supported the measures which had been thus strongly censured. It implied an accusation of a very heavy nature, not directed exclusively against ministers. The language of debate, where ministers only could be affected by charges of this nature, admitting of a latitude of speech, might, in some measure, be allowable, and in some possible cases not improper, but when this was pushed further against those who supported the measures, as well as the ministers who devised them, it amounted to an accusation of a very serious nature, and was therefore, in his opinion, extremely indecent, and totally unjustifiable, unless those who urged them were ready prepared to prove the truth of their assertions.—It was expressly, if he rightly comprehended the arguments, raised upon such random assertions, meant to bear upon their Lordships as well as the immediate agents and actors;—he meant the ministers who recommended the measures, and the noble Lords who supported them, and who were, in the instance to which he was alluding, charged directly with corruption, or of being influenced by corrupt motives. He should submit the impropriety of urging charges of so deep and criminal a complexion, which, from their nature, were so difficult to be refuted, and so easy to be made, even without a possibility of detection; but what proofs did noble Lords deduce in the support of those accusations? None at all. They contented themselves with urging them in loose, indefinite terms, and thereby endeavoured to involve government in a general odium, and of course to add embarrassments to those which naturally attend every government in time of war, and this in particular, now labouring under peculiar circumstances of difficulty and distress;—perhaps such as were never before experienced by any other nation.

If noble Lords meant that their accusations should pass for no more than their current and intrinsic value, upon the general idea, that every opposition to government is always well founded, and that every administration is equally in the wrong; that every opposition arises from sound patriotism, and every administration is carried on by the means of corruption, the matter would hardly deserve a single animadversion. That, in the present instance, was not the case;

particulars had been stated; and specific charges had been made. Ministers had not only been accused of weakness, wickedness, and corrupt motives, but the effects of their conduct had been painted in the strongest and most overcharged colours respecting foreign powers; the injustice of their conduct towards Holland had been held forth under the description of piracy and public robbery. This country had been loudly and confidently affirmed to be in a state of imbecility. Her councils described to be weak and wicked; and her power of resistance, or offensive operation, totally annihilated:—that is, our enemies are told, that we have made war upon them from the worst motives, and after enflaming their passions, they are invited to do themselves justice against a people, so far from being formidable as an offensive enemy, as to be totally unable to defend themselves. He would submit to their Lordships, whether this was a language fit to be used? whether it was prudent or politic? or whether, to balance the great evil it might be probably productive of, it promised, or could promise, any advantage?—There was besides a very obvious conclusion, which might be fairly drawn from this stile of argument and accusation, that it laid a foundation for a claim of a monopoly of all the public virtue and talents in the kingdom; he was as ready to acknowledge, as any of the noble Lords might be to make their claims to public virtue and talents; but surely, their own good sense, their discernment, and their candour, would all unite in inducing them not to exclude the just pretensions of others.

It was not even the bad effects of what he had been animadverting on within those walls, or elsewhere, within the island, which was the reason of expressing so anxiously his wishes that nothing of the kind had passed. Experience had convinced him, in a variety of instances, that every thing of consequence which passed in that House soon made its way to the Continent, and was turned to our disadvantage, and in some instances had been productive of the most fatal consequences. He flattered himself, that at so critical a juncture as the present, every discourse which might in its tendency either lead to put our enemies on their guard, or serve to direct their attacks against the weak or vulnerable parts of the empire, would have been carefully abstained from. He had indeed presumed to give an hint of that kind early in the day, and hoped that noble Lords would endeavour as much as possible to steer clear of extraneous

matter, and confine themselves to the question. The present situation of this country was far from being a desirable one. Unanimity was most devoutly to be wished for; if that, however, could not be attained, it was in his opinion no very unreasonable expectation to have formed, that noble Lords would refrain and avoid with all possible caution the touching upon matters which might in their nature serve to put our enemies on their guard, or inspire them with expectations of victory and success, on a confidence of our weakness or inability, either to annoy them or defend ourselves.

Several arguments, he observed, had been urged to prove the injustice and precipitancy of the resolution of issuing letters of marque and reprisal. He should consider them separately, not in the order in which they were urged, but as they had struck his memory, and that in the shortest manner, and fewest words he was capable of expressing himself.

Three points had been specially insisted on, in order to prove the injustice of our conduct towards Holland; one was, that the treaty on the table was not binding on the republic, or any part or parcel of it; the second, although it had been binding on the province of Holland, that the aggression could not be considered as an act of the state, or the Seven United Provinces; and lastly, that the treaty was neither acknowledged or ratified, because it was no more than a project to be taken up and carried, or not carried, into execution, upon some future day, merely at the free will of the contracting or negotiating parties: still later in the debate it had been said by a noble Lord (Shelburne) that whether eventually binding, or not binding, it was not to take effect till after a certain contingency, namely, till after our rebel subjects, described in the instrument or treaty on the table under the appellation of the United States of America, should be declared independent; and consequently, till that event should take place, which might never happen, the treaty could not be considered in fact, or even in deduction, to be in an existing state.

To each of those arguments he should, as well as he was able, endeavour to give an answer, and shape it in such a manner, as to apply it directly to the mere matter, carefully abstaining from any personal or extraneous observations; but merely confining himself to the proper subject of debate.

He was conscious of his great inferiority to the noble Lord who spoke last, in respect of the talents and information necessary to enable him to contend with his Lordship in points of political discussion; his pursuits and habits led
another

another way, and by no means fitted him for such an undertaking. For this reason, if for no other, he would treat the subject in that stile of argument, which the portion of common sense and experience Providence had indued him with would enable him, and would familiarize it in such a manner, as to bring it on a level with his own poor understanding, as well as that of others, who, not having the abilities or opportunities of the noble Lord, were willing to content themselves with exercising those talents, however slender, in coming to a judgment and determination upon a subject, which their situation in that House, and the duty annexed to it, expressly called upon them to give on the present occasion.—All he could undertake to promise for himself, if he should come to an unwise or improper determination, was, that it should be an act, not of the intention; that is, if he was wrong, it should be with an intention to act right; and if in the event he should form a wrong judgment, he should have at least the private satisfaction, in his own mind, of imputing it to its true cause, a real inability to form a true one.

His Lordship observed, that many curious arguments had been resorted to, for the purpose of proving the injustice of the measure. It had been urged, in the first place, that the treaty found in Mr. Laurens's papers was no more than a sketch, proposition, or plan, to be hereafter considered, but in its present state by no means binding even upon the contracting parties themselves, much less upon those whom (at least one of them *i. e.* Holland,) it had no authority to bind.—Secondly, it had been strongly pressed by the noble Lord who spoke last, that though the treaty had been just what it imported to be, a treaty between the Seven United Provinces and the delegate or representative of our rebellious subjects in arms, it was nevertheless perfectly harmless and inoffensive in its nature; because it was not to take effect, but upon a contingency which might never take place, and if it should take place, would leave the States or Republic of Holland at liberty, in common with the other powers of Europe, to enter into a treaty with America, as she or they would with any other sovereign or independent state.—He meant, as the noble Lord had explained it,—“When this country shall have acknowledged the independency of America.”

He should not maintain his argument upon the claim of existing alliances; he should not describe the secret treaty as an act of treachery or breach of public faith, and a violation of public friendship.—He meant to consider the act, as

it might be supposed to affect two independent states, who stood upon terms of mutual amity, and who bore no further relation, or were no otherwise bound to each other, than as acknowledging the general dominion, or force of the law of nations.—Looking, therefore, upon Great Britain and the Seven United Provinces bound to each other by this *common tie* and relation he had described, he wished their Lordships to reflect, only for a moment, and see fairly and impartially how the case stood?

A very considerable part of the subjects of the British empire rebel against the sovereign power, and by open arms endeavour to shake off the dominion of the established government; and another power pending the contest, *i. e.* Holland, does what? They enter into negotiation, and actually sign a treaty of commerce with the rebels thus described. If this was not a most notorious aggression on the part of Holland, he was totally at a loss to know what could be denominated an aggression; and for this express reason, if for no other, “that it violated the very first principles of national good faith, and of the established laws which mutually bind sovereign and independent states in their conduct towards their respective subjects.” It was a farce to talk of a project, or a plan; the very instant this project or plan was signed it became a treaty; the tenor of the instrument spoke for itself; the terms of it were explicit and absolute, and declared the fixed intentions of the contracting parties in every paragraph. There was not a single condition stated or implied, but the one he was just about to offer a short observation or two upon, which was, “that the treaty was not to take place till after our rebel subjects should be declared independent.”

It was totally unnecessary to trouble their Lordships upon this ground, unless it were expressly maintained, that the whole of the question of the justice or injustice of the measure turned upon that single point. To press it in argument as part of the case, or by way of extenuation, was idle: if, on the contrary, noble Lords were ready to make it the great basis on which the question was to be discussed, he was ready to meet them upon that ground. The contingency, that so considerable a part of our rebel subjects in arms were to be declared independent, was a presumption in itself of the most insolent and aggravated nature, and plainly pointed to an encouragement to our rebel subjects to persist in their revolt or rebellion. It spoke this language, or it imported nothing.

We will give you every secret assistance in our power; we will

will dissolve, or worse than dissolve, all our engagements with the power you are at war with. We will, in like manner, promote the views of your new ally, the French King; and as by those means you will probably be enabled to throw off the natural allegiance and political obedience you owe the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain, when by our secret assistance, &c. you shall have happily attained your ends, we shall then faithfully perform the terms of this treaty now executed."

That this interpretation was agreeable to common sense, supported by common experience, he was ready to submit to their Lordships; nay, he would venture to affirm, that there was not a man alive, who thought freely and impartially on the subject, who could put so great a violence on his understanding, as to persuade himself, or others, that the treaty was not a compleat treaty in all its parts, and not a project, or mere leading proposition; or, that the condition or contingency to which the treaty was postponed, was any more than a mere trick to evade the consequences, which one of the contracting parties wished to avoid, if it was to be carried into immediate execution;—namely, an instant declaration of war upon the part of this country.

Another argument was speciously urged, and much insisted upon by the noble Lord to whose arguments he was now particularly alluding. He heard that noble Lord with pleasure. His Lordship was so well informed, and spoke so ably upon every subject he rose to, that he always attended to whatever came from his Lordship with no less attention than reverence. He bowed to his Lordship's authority upon almost every occasion, and when he differed from the noble Lord, he was ready to attribute it to a want of capacity in himself. But however circumscribed his own talents might be, in matters of difficulty he was bound in conscience to follow whenever they led; satisfied that nothing short of conviction ought to operate so as to induce him to come to any solemn opinion upon a subject of such magnitude and importance. He was sorry to be obliged to totally differ from the noble Lord. Several arguments, in extenuation of the conduct of the States General of the United Provinces, had been urged by the noble Lord, to demonstrate, that the treaty on the table, from the particular frame and constitution of the Dutch republic, would not admit of the satisfaction demanded by Sir Joseph Yorke from the States General, respecting the contents of that very offensive paper.—He was yet to learn, that either directly or indirectly, the answer given to our ambassador of postponing the

the explanation *ad referendum*, or the arguments used by the noble Lord, as to the constitution of the Dutch republic, contained the least shadow of apology or justification : so far from it, that he was clearly convinced, if no other point were considered, the conduct of the States General, in that particular alone, justified the issuing the manifesto.

He was ready, in argument, to give up all he had been hitherto contending for. He was ready to grant, that the treaty was no more than a project, and that the contingency, as to the time it was to take effect, softened the project, though it had been a treaty, and took the sting out of it. Yet still the refusal to give satisfaction, as in the instance of postponing *ad referendum*, had a retrospective view, and in fact confirmed and ratified every thing which constituted a real treaty, and upon that account solely amounted to an aggression, upon which the manifesto was founded.

This brought him back to what he meant particularly in this stage of the debate to make a few observations upon, that was the supposed intimate knowledge of the noble Lord respecting the frame and constitution of the interior of the Dutch government. With this he acknowledged himself to be little acquainted. It might or might not be just as the noble Lord had described. The difficulties might be numerous ; the embarrassments great ; the instances quoted by the noble Lord, which his Lordship had stated to have happened at former periods, might have been faithfully and correctly stated, with all the peculiar circumstances which accompanied them. But although he was ignorant of the particular facts referred to, and was ready to take the whole upon trust, he could by no means subscribe to the conclusion drawn by the noble Lord ; for without entering into a critical enquiry about the respective rights, immunities, original institutions, and local privileges of this or that particular province, city, or district ; or tracing out the relation they bore to each other respectively, or to the governing aggregate power, he was fully authorised to maintain, on the general law of nations, that every state was bound to answer for the act or acts of its subjects, or those who acknowledged its sovereign or supreme dominion. It was absurd to suppose, that a single exception could exist against this general rule ; if there could one, another might be pleaded, and so on, *ad infinitum*. It would, in that case, be impossible to draw a line. And he wished that noble Lords would seriously consider the doctrine, and see what mischiefs it might, nay must lead to, and what an incongruity and repugnancy of conduct it would involve. In the
pre-

present instance, for example sake, he begged their Lordships to look forward to the consequences which might flow from a conduct so absurd and preposterous ;—nothing less than that one, two, or more of the provinces might legally or constitutionally be at liberty to openly or secretly, directly or indirectly, support our rebel subjects in arms against us ; while the other part of the republic, as allies, were giving us actual assistance for the purpose of reclaiming, and compelling them to return to their former state of obedience.

He was indeed ashamed to trouble their Lordships in refuting a species of apology, or justification, which carried, by inference at least, if not expressly, so glaring an absurdity on the very face of it ; because he might have well saved the House and himself the trouble of offering a single syllable upon the subject, by standing on this indisputable, self-evident proposition, as supported by the law of nations, and the unerring rules of justice and common sense :—“ That every state is responsible for the acts of their respective subjects ;—or, that every state is so far responsible for the acts of their subjects, as to disavow the subject matter of complaint, and promise that sort or *quantum* of redress which the constitution ; or nature of the interior or municipal frame of their government enables or impowers them to give.” Apply this principle or position to the case under consideration, and he believed there was not a noble Lord that heard him who would not instantly acknowledge, that the refusal to disavow the act, by postponing the consideration of the complaint *ad referendum*, though it might not be in the power of the States General to punish the offenders, answered exactly that species of implied approbation, which amounted to an aggression fully authorising the manifesto on the table.

Noble Lords, in the course of their arguments, drew similitudes from the nature of our own constitution ; they maintained, that in many instances redress could not be had from individuals, nor satisfaction obtained but by due course of law. He believed no man disputed it ; but he wished that noble Lords would see how far this argument met the motives which induced the issuing the manifesto, or bore upon the case therein made out. He was not to be told, that in this country persons not offending against any subsisting law could not have a measure of punishment set out, where the municipal laws were silent ; but he was yet to learn, or hear a possible case stated, where an individual, town, country, district, or part of this island, having committed an act that might lead to a just cause of rupture with an independent or sovereign

reign state, in which the parties offending were not in some shape or other accountable to, and punishable by the municipal law, and the nation bound to make reparation, as being responsible for the acts of its subjects. If that was a clear proposition, binding upon us, it must clearly bind every other power; and he wished to be clearly understood, when laying down the foregoing general doctrine, that he meant to apply it to every particular, as well as more general case that could possibly arise: and he would push this proposition its full length, and follow it with this specific declaration, "that if any subject, or greater number, under the dominion or government of this country, should, by an act of any kind whatever, be the cause of creating a difference or disagreement, or what might, without satisfaction given by the necessary measures or remedies which the law of nations prescribes: such an act would be punishable, though no specific municipal law existed for that purpose, upon another general law, no less binding and operative, namely, the law of nations." Were it otherwise, the power of the state would be grossly defective, because it would suppose this, that a right destructive and ruinous to the well being of the state resided in individuals; a supposition too nonsensical in itself, and too pregnant with absurdity, to gain a moment's credit. "Every man, in his opinion, therefore, who propagated any thing which had, or might be productive of a rupture with foreign powers, was punishable, not perhaps by the municipal laws of that state, but by the law of nations, by which every individual, as well as the state itself, is indisputably bound; and therefore in every instance in which the doctrine applied, the law of nations was consequently interwoven into, and formed part of the municipal law of the country."

The noble Lord, to whom he had so often alluded, contended, that by the act of our minister at the Hague, and the renunciation of the treaties of 1674, the *casus fœderis*, from the instant that paper was delivered, ceased to exist. He confessed, that this was the first time he ever heard of that circumstance. He should, however, take the noble Lord's word for it, being satisfied, that his Lordship would not have mentioned it, if he had not good ground for so doing. But, be that as it may, the existence of the fact was totally immaterial to the argument, in the manner his Lordship had taken it up. It might take off from the treachery and turpitude of the act, but that was all, and very little even in that light; for if he understood the noble Lord right, the paper contain-

ing the supposed renunciation, or dissolution of the existing treaties between Great Britain and Holland, was delivered in 1776; whereas the treaty signed by Van Berkel and the rebel delegate was executed in 1778, so that the renunciation was posterior to the treaty.

The matter of justification being out of the question, as he was just going to observe, the date of the two facts took away even the colour of extenuation; for it amounted to this clearly, that in the midst of the most confidential seeming amity, and while three several treaties of alliance, and the most intimate connection still remained in full force, our pretended friends, but real enemies, had, under such sacred sanctions, secretly entered into a treaty with our rebel subjects, for a commercial intercourse, which treaty had for its eventual object the separation or dismemberment of a considerable part of the empire, and the defection and independence of several millions of its subjects.

He had dwelt upon this circumstance so long only to shew, that no part of the turpitude of the republic of Holland was, or could be lessened, or done away, by any act of ours, subsequent to the date of the treaty; not that he thought it was necessary at all to justify the measure, having already considered it as a general proposition, "that a power in amity with us, entering into a treaty with our rebel subjects, contrary to the established law of nations, was in itself unsupported by any other circumstance, fully sufficient to justify the measure of issuing letters of marque and reprisal against the power who should act in that manner."

His Lordship having very fully and ably debated the justice of the measure, then proceeded to deliver his sentiments on its expediency.—On this point his Lordship was not so diffuse.

He readily assented to the general impression which had been endeavoured to be made on the House by several noble Lords near him, that war at all times should be the effect of necessity, but more particularly so at the present period, when we had so great and formidable a combination leagued against us. And if the measure, the propriety of which was so strongly called into question this day, was not a measure of necessity, those who undertook to advise it would indeed be much to blame. For his part, he thought it came within that description; and though he wished, as much as any noble Lord who heard him, to avoid a measure at all

events hazardous, and perhaps dangerous, and attended with singular difficulty and embarrassment, yet after fully considering the advantages and disadvantages which might or must result from it, he made a choice on that very ground, the only one on which noble Lords declared they thought the present measure defensible.

It was needless to recur to any further arguments upon the justice of the measure; he presumed that had already been amply discussed; the point now to be considered was, whether we could, with either honour or public security, have acted otherwise than we had done? He was of opinion we could not; because the possible evils which might arise from the step we had taken would be felt in their fullest extent, and in his opinion more fatally, if Holland had been permitted to effect that under cover of secrecy, and as it were by stealth, which she is now called upon to maintain at her risque and peril: it might, besides, possibly have this good effect, the compelling that justice by force of arms, which the most unexampled forbearance and every other effort in our power, by the means of amicable persuasion and remonstrance, had failed to accomplish.

But supposing that the same spirit and disposition which dictated the causes of complaint on our part, should still continue to direct the councils of the republic; supposing that they should uphold by force, what had originated in a breach of faith, and of national perfidy, a recourse to the common occurrences and situations in familiar life, applied to states and kingdoms, would, he believed, justify him in the conclusion, that an open enemy was at all times preferable to a concealed one. If therefore a pre-disposition against us should still continue to manifest itself, such as had made the present still necessary, he was persuaded that the most efficacious means of bringing the States General to a proper and just way of thinking, would be to convince them, that their conduct was not to escape unpunished in either event, whether they had acted hastily or designedly. For his part, he was of opinion, that the best mode of bringing Holland to a real explanation, all other efforts for that purpose having repeatedly failed, was to act precisely as we had done. Holland had now her option; she had it in her power to disclaim those apparent intentions which denoted every appearance of hostility, or she would be compelled to throw off the masque. Upon this ground, if upon no other, he thought the expediency of

of the measure might be fairly defended upon every principle of sound policy.

Many other arguments had been urged against the expediency of the measure, and many reasons stated, in order to prove its impracticability. What, will you add, said noble Lords, Holland to France, Spain, and America? Can you expect to defend yourself, much less make successful war against them all? This was not, in his conception, a mere matter of choice, nor the question, when thus stated, fairly put. It was not an option left to this country, whether she would not chuse to have Holland added to the confederacy already formed in Europe and America—far from it. He who could gravely propose such an alternative, or having it proposed to him, and could hesitate a moment to make a choice, must be worse than incapable—he must be mad. Were that the case, it would indeed furnish the most cogent proofs of every degree of ignorance and incapacity, which had by noble Lords been imputed to ministers; but the question so framed was not truly stated; the question was simply this: Holland is determined to be your enemy at all events; the only choice therefore left to Great Britain, is, whether she would prefer having Holland an open or a secret foe.

Other grounds of impracticability had been warmly pressed in argument, as naturally arising from the treaty entered into by the neutral powers, for the protection of their commerce, to which treaty the States General, noble Lords have affirmed, is a contracting party, and of course under its protection. Predictions of a very extraordinary tendency had been plentifully dealt out upon that supposition; such as that Russia, and the other contracting powers, would be naturally led into the war; and several other predictions, or apprehensions of a similar nature. He did not pretend to enter minutely into those circumstances, nor think it necessary to descend into the probability, or improbability of what Russia might or might not do; but if he understood the noble Lord, who spoke to this point, he believed it was sufficient to observe, that the terms of the armed neutrality had nothing at all to do with the present measure. The armed neutrality, he understood, though he did not pretend to speak from his own knowledge, related only to the protection of a free navigation. It neither respected any transaction in which the contracting parties might be concerned, as powers in a state of common amity, and of course, as he had frequently observed in the course of his

observations, not relative to a free navigation, much less to the breach of previous subsisting treaties with other powers. On the contrary, he understood, that all subsisting treaties, previous to the treaty of neutrality, were expressly excepted; so that upon the whole, as we had no choice relative to Holland, but that of having her as a secret instead of an open enemy, and as the ground of our difference with that republic, whether in respect of the treaty with our rebellious subjects, or the breach of the treaties already subsisting between her and Great Britain, were totally unconnected, and distinct from the treaty entered into by the neutral powers for the protection of their commerce, and for the preservation of a free navigation; he trusted that he had satisfactorily proved to their Lordships that whether the practicability of the war was certain, its justice and expediency had been clearly and most unquestionably made out.

His Lordship concluded with observing, that as the address moved by the noble Viscount neither did nor was meant to preclude a farther and fuller discussion, nor to bind a single Lord who might support it with his vote that day, he should of course be against the subsequent motion moved by the noble Duke.

Lord
Camden.

Lord *Camden* said, he had long since resolved never more to trouble their Lordships on any part of the subject which would of course necessarily mix and force itself into the discussion of the question now before the house; he meant the American war, including its various circumstances and necessary relatives. He was long since convinced it was to no manner of purpose for him to take up any matter in that House upon adverse ground. He had repeated experience how nugatory it would be, as it had always hitherto proved, to come there as an opponent to the measures decided upon by ministers, supported as they had uniformly been by the most decided majorities in that House. There was, besides, the less temptation, and the fewer hopes upon this occasion, as the subject of the present debate had been so amply discussed, upon a motion made last year, by his noble friend near him (Shelburne). Before he proceeded, therefore, to submit his poor opinion to their Lordships, he would beg leave to premise, that whatever he might offer was by way of advice to those whom his Majesty had entrusted with the conducting the affairs of government, in hopes that it might make a suitable impression; and to express his wish, that as they were sufficiently strong and powerful to carry any measure,

sure, that they would adopt that which seemed most suited to the dignity and honour of the nation, and to the advancement and preservation of its interests.

It was for this reason, and this only, he rose. He rose from a call of duty, for the last time, and whatever might be the event of this final effort to save his country, at least to mitigate her distresses and misfortunes, he should retire from his fruitless attendance in that House with this consolation, that he had discharged his duty to the best of his poor abilities, so long as it promised to be productive of the smallest or most remote good; and that he declined giving their Lordships or himself any further trouble, when hope was at an end, and when even zeal had no object which could call it into activity. Looking back on former transactions, he had great reason to lament that he did not form the resolution earlier, or that some circumstance had not arose which might have been the means of preventing him from engaging in so ineffectual a struggle. Either event would have freed him, as well as many other noble Lords, from much chagrin, and a series of the most mortifying disappointments, still the more highly aggravated, because they involved in them consequences which seemed to him to tend, if not directly and inevitably lead, to the ruin of his country.

The noble and learned Lord who spoke last, with his usual ability and dexterity in debate, had, as he said, brought the question within a narrow compass. He had indeed within a very narrow compass! He had reduced it to a mere question of order, out of which he had endeavoured to entirely exclude the formal, as well as substantial merits of the subject matter of debate. The learned Lord said, it is nothing to the present question, whether the measure was practicable, whether it was unjust, or whether it might prove ruinous to the nation; but it was merely a point relative to the regularity of their Lordships' proceedings, whether the address moved by the noble Lord in the green ribbon should be entertained, or a negative be put upon that moved by the noble Duke? This, he confessed, was a curious method of coming to a decision upon any question, and upon every question; the regularity of their Lordships' proceedings were to be preserved at all events, though the salvation of the nation might eventually depend upon their being dispensed with in the particular instance.

But if the doctrine itself was not to be impeached, how did the learned Lord prove its orthodoxy? By the most extraordinary

traordinary and novel kind of proof imaginable, where proof is deemed necessary. The noble Lord says, upon his own authority, that there is not a single precedent existing, where a royal message, or other communication from the throne, has not had the preference, or where any other matter has been introduced into, or mixed with the matter so communicated. He begged leave to observe, that this was no more than a mere unauthenticated assertion of a noble Lord in his place: that however confidently the assertion might be urged, and with however loud a voice and emphasis, it could pass, or be received, for no more than it imported; a belief, opinion, or *dictum*, not binding, nor capable of bringing home conviction to any one noble Lord, at either side of the House, who heard it. He, for instance, upon equal credit, and equal authority, was intitled to say, that he was ready to assert, or believed, which was really the case, that there were many, very many precedents, in the records of Parliament, where other matters were proceeded upon previous to the taking royal communications and messages into consideration. Here then his and the learned Lord's contrary creeds and assertions stood in exact *equilibrio*; and it was consequently incumbent upon the learned Lord, who made the first assertion, either to prove it from parliamentary documents, their Lordships' Journals on the table, or to confess, that his assertion should be considered merely in the light it deserved; an assertion unsupported by evidence of any kind whatever, and solely resting upon that kind of authority. If his Lordship should therefore refuse that species of proof which facts when denied or controverted necessarily require, this would, he trusted, amount to a *prima facie* refutation of the fact as stated, and of every argument raised and deduction drawn from its supposed existence. It was indeed the only colour of argument which the noble Lord seemed willing to trust to; and which, if it should fail him, opened the field of debate and free discussion, and let in the House to enter into a full investigation of the subject, upon the grounds of justice and expediency, not contrary, but agreeably to the ancient established usages and customs of Parliament.

The learned and noble Lord had, it was true, followed it with another argument, pretty nearly of a similar complexion and import; for, conscious that the former could not stand the test, his Lordship had recourse to one precisely of the same size. Said the noble Lord, "the measure sanctioned by the King's name is to be considered as the measure of ministers; and

and while it would be extremely indecent, as coming under that sanction, to postpone its consideration, or controvert its propriety, ministers are nevertheless responsible to the Parliament and public; and the motion made by the noble Duke, or any other motion of a similar tendency, may, as soon as the answer moved is agreed to, or at any future period, be taken up *de novo*, their Lordships not being bound by the present proposed vote, no more than if it had never passed that House." This was, indeed, going a great length, and was such a mode of reasoning as the learned Lord, with all those powers of an advocate, which he was known to possess in so eminent a degree, would not, he was persuaded, be able to maintain.

Here there were two objects for their Lordships' consideration. One was the prerogative of the Sovereign to make war, which no man disputed; the other, the exercise of that prerogative, which the learned Lord had acknowledged was presumed to be exercised by advice. In what shape then did the question come before the House, but that the same persons who advised the measure, likewise advised the message; and that their Lordships were called upon to give their approbation, not to what his Majesty had personally directed to be carried into execution, but what he had by the servants of the crown been advised to do. The noble Lord was at liberty to take his option—either to accept of a personal compliment to the Sovereign, for having acted as he had done, in conformity to the constitutional advice of his servants; or considering the measure merely as a ministerial one, open to that general species of discussion to which every measure submitted by them to Parliament is always subject.

He begged their Lordships, however, to look a little further, and turn their attention from mere words to things. His Majesty's ministers advise a declaration of war, or, which is in substance the same thing, a manifesto, accompanied with orders for issuing letters of marque and reprisals. They further advise his Majesty to communicate this to his Parliament; but *cui bono*? for their Lordships are not to deliberate; they are not to seek any further information, or mix what the learned Lord is pleased to call extraneous matter.—Nothing like it :---according to the language of the noble Lord, they are implicitly, without hesitation, doubt, or enquiry, to echo back the very words of the message, in almost *totidem verbis*, and containing the most full and unreserved approbation of the measure thus communicated in all its parts. The learned Lord's abilities were unquestionable; his powers
of

Of debate universally acknowledged; but there were many things to which he was not equal; he could not reconcile impossibilities; he could not put a face upon what was absurd in itself, or contradictory, and make it wear the appearance of reason, argument, and truth. It was not in the power of the most willing and zealous advocate, nor the greatest orator, to do it. To address their Lordships upon a measure previously determined upon, and which was laid it was indecent to discuss, was a farce—it was monstrous and contained in it every appearance of mockery and premeditated insult.

Yet if the attempt itself was provoking, and had still been further aggravated by the reasons urged in its support, he would, for an instant, after he had stripped the question of the cloud of words and phrases in which it had been so ingeniously wrapt up, point to the consequences.

The matter, when stripped of its artificial cloathing, was this:—The conduct of the States General had been such, as, in the opinion of ministers, to make it necessary to issue letters of marque and reprisals; the evidence on which ministers had thought proper to prove this pretended necessity was on the table. The question then was this; shall those who do not, as well as those who do, think the evidence sufficiently cogent to justify the measure, agree to it? and shall the dissentients in opinion wave all opposition? O! to be sure, says the noble Lord; “You are bound to do it; you are bound by precedent, in the first instance; moreover the respect which you owe to your Sovereign requires it. The measure may be a very mischievous or unwise one; but that is nothing at all; you cannot according to the order of your Lordships proceedings dissent; and if you could, itself, it would be indecent and disrespectful;—but I can tell you what you may do; after the address shall be agreed to, you may then controvert the justice and expediency of what you had before only approved of for form sake.”

He would not say, that those were the noble and learned Lord's precise words; but he appealed to every noble lord who heard him, if it was not their unequivocal import. Now he begged leave to say, that no argument or reasoning it was possible for the mind of man to conceive could be more fallacious or unfounded; for how would the case stand? That war had been denounced or made against the republic of Holland during the recess of Parliament; that Parliament, upon being made acquainted with it, approved of the measure, and consequently bound themselves and the nation to all the consequences of a state of hostility with a powerful nation: but
for:

for all this, the noble and learned Lord had a *salvo* in either event, be the measure right or wrong ; for in the first place, the order of their lordships' proceedings obliged them to echo back the measure in the highest terms of approbation ; and if the nation should, in the event, be ruined, or undone, the people would have the satisfaction of calling upon ministers, whom his lordship had described as ultimately responsible for the consequences.

After endeavouring to shew the extreme absurdity and fallacy of the learned lord's arguments, and holding them up in a great variety of lights, to evince their sophistry as well as express contradiction, his lordship said, since he was up, he would consider the main question shortly, in some of its principal relations.

He would not pretend to say, taking all the treaties subsisting between this country, how far the *casus fœderis* did or did not actually exist. It was certain, from the manner they were drawn up, as well as the several occasions which gave them birth, that they were extremely complicated, and difficult to be at the same time specifically and equitably interpreted ; not but he thought Great Britain and Holland, if they came with a willing mind and in a good temper to qualify their respective claims, the several seeming contradictions which pervaded the different parts of those treaties might be reconciled, and a concordance effected between the whole, so as to guard the rights, claims, and reasonable and equitable expectations of both. Be that as it may, the present question, so far as the justice of the measure was concerned, must stand or fall by those treaties, such as they were.

By the treaty of 1674 it was expressly stipulated, that Great Britain and Holland should be at liberty to carry all kinds of goods and merchandises, either of their own growth or produce, or belonging to any other power, without let, hindrance, or molestation, under any pretence whatsoever, except the particular articles therein specified, under the description of military stores, which were very different from what was at present considered as military stores or contraband, and that even to an enemy actually at war. This, however severe it might appear, or harsh it might sound, beyond a possibility of redress, upon the terms of the treaty, was the basis of all the succeeding treaties ; and if broken or violated, unless in such instances as had been subsequently provided for, most clearly bound Great Britain, or if the latter, urged by a necessity not in being, foreseen, or provided

for, at the time of making the treaty, refused to abide by it, such a conduct on our part would instantly dissolve the obligation on which the *casus fœderis* was supposed to exist, nay, only upon which it could at all exist.

When their lordships, therefore, came to decide upon the present measure, as a measure of state, it was a duty incumbent upon them to have every paper necessary to a full information on the subject, as it really stood. In the first place, the treaties themselves, but more particularly the several transactions from the first beginnings of this business, such as the complaints of the Dutch, on account of our seizing their ships and vessels, the confiscation of the goods and merchandises belonging, or supposed to belong to the powers at war with us, aboard those ships; in short, every matter respecting the opinions entertained in Holland. On the contrary, their Lordships had not a tittle of information, but a mere bead-roll of our complaints, as made, from time to time, by our minister at the Hague. In his opinion, their lordships, before they came to a solemn determination upon so important a question, which might in its consequences involve this country into endless misery and ruin, ought to trace the disagreements between the courts of London and the Hague to their origin, in order to know where the fault began; if on our part, that speedy satisfaction might be given; if not, that be the event what it would, we might endeavour to reconcile ourselves to that republic, upon the most persuasive of all arguments, that of unavoidable necessity.

Most clearly, in his opinion, if the treaty of 1674 was not binding upon Great Britain, none of the rest could be binding on Holland; and when the noble Viscount, who moved the address in answer to his Majesty's message, recounted the different refusals of the States General to comply with the several requisitions made by the British court, for the performance of subsisting treaties, he began at the wrong end. His lordship should, in order to give the least degree of weight to his arguments, have proved, that we had inviolably adhered to the terms of that treaty in all its parts, so far as it depended upon us, or if any deviation had happened, to promise and undertake that the cause of complaint should be immediately and effectually removed.

He had no other information on the subject, for his own part, but that species recommended by the noble lord in the green ribbon, namely, the foreign Gazettes. This authority was either no authority, or it was such as ought to be
relied

relied on. He was to presume the latter; otherwise the noble Viscount would not, he supposed, have recommended such information as might be found in the Dutch and other foreign Gazettes to direct their lordships' determination. Being ready to take this information to be true, after it came so highly sanctioned to him, he must observe, that the Gazettes were very full and explicit on the subject. They were stuffed with reiterated complaints, both from the States General and people of Holland, and contained catalogues of the repeated insults received by their flag, as well as the innumerable injuries on the property and persons of the subjects of the republic. If he understood right, those complaints were as frequent before the requisition made by the British court, for the succours stipulated to be furnished by the treaties of 1678 and 1716, in case either power should be attacked, as at any time since. These were points which, in his apprehension, called for the most full and serious discussion, being of a nature so intimately connected with the measure then under their lordships' consideration, that it was impossible, with any propriety, to proceed a single step further in the business, consonant to the invariable principles of honour and justice, without being previously informed of every material circumstance respecting the conduct of Holland on one hand, and of our ministers on the other.

Many arguments, and some seemingly specious ones, had been used respecting the treaty on the table entered into by the pensionary, Van Berkel, and Mr. Lee, the congress delegate.—It was at one time called a perfect and complete treaty, binding upon the parties; it was again represented as a treaty, founded on a possible contingency hereafter to happen, before the condition could operate; and yet, however repugnant the latter comment might be to the former, the contingency was supposed, though ever so absurdly, to express or imply a positive, unconditional undertaking. He should be sorry to waste his own, or their lordships' time, in endeavouring to reconcile or expose the manifest absurdity resulting from such a stile of conclusion. The treaty was intended either to take effect immediately, or it was contingent; if contingent, it was preposterous to describe it as an agreement immediately binding; if immediately operative, it could not be contingent, but must have instantly sprung into being, and still continue in existence; yet nothing had been urged, either in the shape of fact or argument, tending to shew that any one step had been taken by the governing

or any subordinate power in Holland, which betrayed either directly or indirectly any intention in the States General of an hostile nature; that they knew any thing of the intrigues of Van Berkel, much less had determined to ratify and confirm, as an act of the Sovereign, what had probably been the mere unauthorized act of Van Berkel himself, supported by some of the magistrates of the city of Amsterdam, who were well known to be in the French interest.

But supposing, so far as the treaty went, that it was a complete one, before any conclusion was drawn, he thought it behoved those who were persuaded of its completion, to point out how far it did operate, and the persons whom it was supposed to bind, or could bind. Did it bind the state or republic? He believed no person would venture to affirm it did. Did it even bind the province of Holland? That yet remained to be proved. Who then did it bind? For aught he could learn, from any thing that appeared to the contrary, it neither did or could bind any other persons, but merely the contracting parties whose names were signed to the instrument.

While he was ready to condemn ministers for their general conduct, he was not ignorant, that to steer clear of difficulties, in the present critical state of this country, required much dexterity and address. The treaty of 1674 was productive of much embarrassment; and though he perfectly agreed with his noble friend near him (Shelburne) that the late Earl of Chatham acted with great caution, he would add, however, that to his certain knowledge, he acted, considering the embarrassments arising from the treaty of 1674, with peculiar address. Like a wise and spirited minister, convinced of the necessity of preventing our enemies from being supplied with the means of prolonging the war, he perhaps sometimes deviated from the strict letter of that treaty, from motives of sound policy, dictated by the particular exigency of the times. He remembered, that his lordship had frequently consulted him on the occasion, having then the honour of being one of the law officers of the crown: (Attorney General) and he recollected, that the necessity of such a conduct was stated with candour and openness; that every possible care was taken to give the complainants satisfaction; that fair words were returned when nothing more could with propriety be given; that a kind of compromise was frequently pressed, and that the result was rather a temporary suspension of all the treaties, than any thing like a demand of a rigid performance of them

on either side. This was the mode by which that great statesman conducted the affairs of this country, to the great end which he proposed to himself, that of humbling the power of France, and breaking and dissolving the compact between the several branches of the House of Bourbon. In the very zenith of his power, in the very flush of victory; he had many and strong pretences, if not real provocations, for employing the then irresistible force of this country against the property and possessions of the Seven United Provinces. But he was too magnanimous, too wise—he judiciously qualified the claims of this country, as well as set limits to the unreasonable demands of that republic. He acted with moderation, resolution, firmness, and justice. He had not only Holland to manage, but the northern kingdoms, who were at the time, independent of their extreme jealousy of the growing naval power of Great Britain, rather inimically, or at least unfriendly inclined towards us, particularly Russia and Sweden; yet, among such a variety of difficulties, so many adverse views, and contending interests, so many real causes given, and more pretended; such were the great abilities of that unrivalled statesman, that he avoided a rupture; and though Holland might in some instances think herself not perfectly well treated, yet, upon the whole, she found, that no hardship, or colour of hardship, was imposed upon her, but what merely arose from political necessity. On the contrary, what was the conduct of the present ministers? Before the commencement of hostilities with France, or Spain, they ordered our ambassador at the Hague to present a most insolent memorial, containing threats of a most unprecedented nature, when addressed to an independent state of any description; but when addressed to an ally, to the last degree provoking, arrogant, and indecent. It was to this memorial, more than to any other circumstance whatever, that he attributed all the subsequent conduct of the republic. The noble Lord in the green ribbon represented the people of Holland as divided by parties, and distracted in their public councils. He represented them as governed or misled by a Gallo American faction. The noble Viscount might be well founded in his assertion; but if there was a Gallo-American faction, which, unhappily for Holland and Great Britain, guided the councils of the republic, contrary to the mutual benefit, advantage, and interest of both, which in his opinion could not be separated without manifest injury to each, he would ask the noble Viscount, or the noble and learned Lord, or any other

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of his Majesty's ministers present, who or what it was that created this Gallo-American faction?—most clearly, themselves. Their arrogance and insolence it was that furnished food for discontent, and furnished arguments to the secret and open friends of France, in the republic, to inflame the minds of their fellow-subjects against the government and people of Great Britain, and to aggravate any part of our conduct, so as to persuade the Hollanders, that the insults and affronts daily put upon them tended to establish an universal dominion on the ocean, and to lead to restrictions upon commerce, suited to the interests and well known ambition of the English nation, who could bear no rival in trade, and who would, should she prevail in her present contest with America, derive such an accumulation of naval force, as to enable her to give law to the whole world on that element.

The very arguments so strongly insisted upon by the noble Lords who supported the address, allowing them to have been relative, justified more and more the conclusions he had been drawing, and clearly demonstrated, that if there was any powerful faction, or Gallo-American faction in Holland, sufficiently strong to promote the interests and views of France and America, in preference to those of Great Britain, it was the British Ministry alone who were the cause of it.

For his own part, though he was strongly induced to believe, that France and America had many very powerful and zealous friends in Holland, he could not be persuaded, that their influence extended the length the noble Lord in the green ribbon endeavoured to induce their Lordships to believe it did. The Dutch were a wise and politic people; commerce, and the advantages derivable from it, were the uniform objects of their political pursuits. Their safety and independence naturally led them to look towards Great Britain as their only best friend and protector, against the encroachments, or other more formidable views or attempts which might be made upon them, by the great powers on the Continent, who possessed territories immediately in their neighbourhood. They had another motive, and a most well-founded one, for trusting to the friendship, assistance, and alliance of Great Britain, in preference to any other, which was founded in the unerring and immutable principles of sound policy, and national wisdom; and it was this, that Great Britain might be safely depended upon; because, besides the ties of treaty and alliance, she would be led to assist Holland on her own particular account; because, in case Holland should fall, such an event would sooner or later lead to her own destruction. He there-
fore

fore heartily coincided in the ideas of his noble friend who spoke lately, that the interests of Holland and Great Britain were the same; the advantages to be derived from any assistance which might be given to either mutual; and their views exactly correspondent, the security of their independence, and the extension of their commerce.

Those considerations (of which that republic, renowned for its wisdom, could not be ignorant) furnished him with additional reasons to suppose, that the governing power of Holland never meant to adopt any measures sufficient to justify the manifesto. There were, in every state, men of a particular frame of mind; enthusiasts, he would suppose, that would be glad that the blessings or advantages derived from their own form of government should be extended to other nations, and at length become universally prevalent; of this description he made no doubt but there might be some in Holland. Many might be seduced, by the prospect of gain, and a more extensive commerce, to wish well to the independent States of America; and others again might have conceived a predilection for France; but allowing all this to be true, he was ready to maintain and prove, that if it had not been for the precipitate, violent, and passionate conduct of our ministers, in restraining, or rather totally interrupting and suspending, the Dutch commerce, before ever we could, by the assistance of the most subtle invention, frame a pretence for acting as we have done, no war, under any form then existing in Europe, or between the subjects of any of the European states who possess dominions in America, or elsewhere out of Europe, the factions in Holland, whether republican, or Gallo-American, could never have pretended, nor would have dared to shew the least predilection for France or America! Nor had they yet arose to such a degree of strength, even under those unfavourable circumstances he had been describing, as to be able to control and direct the councils of the republic, contrary to its true interests, and against the faith of the engagements subsisting between England and Holland.

Upon the whole, therefore, of the justice of the measure under their Lordships' consideration, as well in point of the facts dated in the papers on the table; the provocations given on our part; and the conduct of Holland under those repeated insults and acts of arrogance and oppression towards them, as from the reasons of policy, and the nature of the connection between this country and the Seven United Provinces, he was firmly persuaded, that the resolution of going

to war agreeably to the terms of the manifesto, ought to be immediately, if not rescinded, at least, taken into reconsideration, agreeably to the motion made by the noble Duke; and if no better grounds of hostility should be the result of a more particular enquiry, that their Lordships would be bound to order immediate reparation and satisfaction to be given for the injury already sustained by Holland, and of course to desist from a prosecution of further hostilities.

To the expediency of the war little remained to be said; our present situation was such as to render any argument unnecessary. We were already over-matched, and Holland, thrown into the opposite scale, would, he had every reason to believe, be decisive of our fate; but was Holland to be the last enemy we would have to contend with in this already unequal contest?—He feared not;—Russia, if the foreign Gazettes spoke truth, and he had a right to presume they did, on the authority so often quoted in the course of the debate, the authority of the noble Viscount in the green ribbon—Russia had already said more than Holland even pretended to claim under the right of subsisting treaties. She published a new code of maritime law, which was to bind all the powers of Europe, as well neutral as belligerent, and invited those of both descriptions to accede to it, by which it was ordained, that free bottoms made free goods.

France and Spain had already become parties; Holland had acceded to it, and her accession, if the foreign Gazettes were to be relied upon, was accepted of, and so had the other northern powers.—If then “free bottoms” made “free goods,” where did we stand, according to the tenor and professed intention of this treaty? But that, whether Holland was, or was not bound, by the treaties subsisting between Great Britain and her; Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, were free to act as interest or convenience might suggest. It was said, indeed, that this treaty excepted the previous particular engagements of the contracting parties among each other: and that subsisting treaties were an exception to the general rule—granted. But then the basis of the neutral treaty was clearly, that “free bottoms” made “free goods” in all cases, where there was no other treaty existing, contrary to that between the parties, consequently the very principle on which we were now contending for in respect of Holland, that of availing ourselves of our situation, as well in respect of that country, as the northern powers of Europe, was totally at an end.—He would suppose, for argument sake, that Holland, from her prior engagements with this country, was precluded

precluded from the benefit she might otherwise derive from acceding to the armed neutrality ;—what would that tend to ?

The Dutch, who were the great carriers of northern Europe, would not be permitted to carry on that species of commerce.—But would this prevent Russia, Sweden, and Denmark to transport the commodities and native growth of their own country ?—The answer was specific and direct to this : by no means.—The commodities formerly transported by Holland from the place of growth would then be carried in bottoms belonging to or employed by those respective countries—but upon what terms, or under what conditions, and sort of protection ?—Upon the terms that “ free bottoms” make “ free goods,” and under the protection of the aggregate force of the whole armed neutrality, who were bound to each other to assist in the common protection of all commodities carried in free bottoms, according to the engagements entered into by previous existing treaties.

This was a state of facts, and a stile of argument, which he did not expect to hear controverted, or replied to.—If so then, what did it amount to fairly, but this :—That the only advantages we derived from our situation of preventing our enemies being supplied with naval stores by the northern crowns would completely be at an end : For in that case those rights, real or pretended, which we had hitherto continued to exercise, that of stopping and searching the ships of neutral nations, and under some circumstances seizing, and confiscating the property so seized, and in every instance searching, if carrying any commodity deemed to come within the description of naval and warlike stores, would come to be disputed, and we should be then obliged to meet and contend with, not only France, Spain, America and Holland, but likewise with the united force of the rest of the powers which constituted or had acceded to the armed neutrality.

This was such an eventual situation, as the greatest political zealot would not be prepared for, or recommend to encounter.—He was persuaded, it was such as none of their lordships, if the event appeared to be a probable consequence of the present measure (which he much dreaded) would ever consent to.—In the present state of things, and on the grounds he had argued the point, the probabilities tended to create strong fears, that such an event would be the result of a rupture with Holland, and of course of transferring the greatest part of the Carrying trade, till the

public tranquillity of Europe should be re-established, to Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, the respective places of growth.

He begged, before he sat down, to submit the probable consequences of the rupture with Holland in another point of view, though ultimately tending to the same conclusion. It was said, by the noble Viscount, early in the day, that the armed neutrality amounted to no more than a conditional, temporary compact, which bound none of the parties longer than they thought fit, or they found it convenient to adhere to it:—of course, that it was dissoluble at pleasure. He by no means understood the treaty in that light.—On the contrary, it appeared from its tenor, not only to be spontaneously binding, but compulsory as to the object; for although one of the contracting parties might withdraw, and free himself from the particular conditions of support, so far as the terms would directly or indirectly affect other powers, not parties, still the remaining powers, who should continue to adhere to the neutrality, would, notwithstanding, look upon themselves called upon to assist in carrying it into faithful execution, and at the same time it would not be disputed that they would be willing and able to give it effect.—What was the case in the present instance? The neutral powers had acceded to the new system, or new code of maritime law, promulgated or proposed to the other powers of the north of Europe in general. Every neutral power but Portugal had already acceded to it, so had France and Spain. Great Britain, of all the belligerent powers, only refused her assent, and the reason was evident; because the regulations contained in that code were hurtful and injurious to her, and not so to the other powers at war; so that no other alternative remained, but that either the treaty of armed neutrality must be dissolved, or Great Britain, refusing to acquiesce in the regulations, would be involved in a war with the several states, which formed this extraordinary confederacy.

Connecting therefore all those circumstances, with their different relations and probable consequences, further strengthened by what had been stated by his noble friend (lord Shelburne) who spoke lately, that by the renunciation made by Sir Joseph Yorke, in 1779, of all subsisting treaties between Great Britain and Holland,—the maxim that “free bottoms make free goods,” while the former removed the exceptions, and entitled Holland to all the benefits or advantages which she might derive from the treaty, taking it in its most extensive sense, the latter protected the property of the
 republic,

republic, so long as Great Britain and Holland remained in a state of peace.

This being the true state of the question between this country and the United Provinces, he could discover, without pretending to much political sagacity, the real drift and tendency of the present measure, so far as it was a question of state, respecting the present or future conduct of foreign powers.—Ministers were not ignorant of the truth of the arguments he had now resorted to;—they knew that they dare not openly infringe the terms of the armed neutrality, nor defeat the intentions of those powers which had already acceded to it, under the pretence of a breach of treaty committed by Holland; and why so? because they were conscious that no such violation of treaty had in fact taken place.—They did, nor could not forget that they were the first aggressors, and that they seized the Dutch property long before there could exist a breach of treaty, or a pretence for it, that was before any war broke out in Europe. Under those embarrassments, they were fortunately presented with what they thought proper to interpret into an aggression, totally unconnected and independant of the provisions and objects contained in the new code of maritime law, and determined to avenge themselves upon Holland, for what they had themselves, by their ignorance and arrogance, been the real cause, and sole authors of.—But however fraught with artifice and dissimulation this device appeared, he much doubted whether it would receive so ready a faction from the members of the armed neutrality, and of the court of Petersburg, which first formed it, as it seemed to receive in that House. On the contrary, truth would prevail, and be weighed against artifice and evasion.—Ministers began at length to perceive the fatal consequences which were about to arise from their own misconduct.—They knew that Holland was just upon the point of acceding to the armed neutrality, and that persons or deputies had been sent from the Hague to Petersburg, expressly for the purpose of notifying the accession of the republic in due form; nay, for ought he knew, that accession had, or was to have taken place on the very day, perhaps, but if not, within a day or two, of the publication of the manifesto on the table.—Thus by this flimsy pretext ministers flattered themselves that they should at once cover their own blunders, and under the pretence of detecting the Dutch in having entered into a treaty with the American Congress, deprive them of that security and protection which they would, but for

this circumstance, be clearly entitled to as a member of the armed neutrality.—In short, they would now endeavour to conceal or palliate their own guilt, to gloss over their own impolitic, violent, irresolute, and unjustifiable treatment of Holland, which proved the cause of driving that country from her connections with this, and of working her up into a state of indifference, if not of enmity, by seducing the nation into a quarrel totally ministerial, and which the people of Great Britain had nothing to do with, in point of either justice or expediency. But the attempt, he presumed, would prove as destitute of sound policy as it was equally fool hardy and unprincipled. Russia, if previously bound, would see how far the reasons contained in the manifesto were founded, and would conduct herself accordingly.—She would draw the line, when judging of the conduct of the British ministry, that separated or distinguished an act of real necessity, from a measure of mere convenience, and would impartially determine how far the treaty entered into between the pensionary Van Berkel, and Mr. Lee, the Congress delegate, could be fairly presumed, in fact or deduction, to bind the governing power in Holland.

He begged pardon, but he thought he could not sit down under an idea of having fully discharged his duty, without making an observation or two upon what had fallen early in the debate from the noble lord in the green ribbon.

Holland had been represented by the noble Viscount as in a state totally defenceless at home, and extremely vulnerable in the various possessions she held in the eastern and western quarters of the globe—He should not pretend to contradict his lordship, because he was not sufficiently informed on the subject;—but so much he would risque, that every advantage we derived from the war preparation we were in, could at best promise us no more than a short-lived, temporary success. The Dutch were naturally a brave people; they had proved it in a great variety of instances; and history enabled him to pronounce with confidence, that they had upon many occasions shewed themselves inferior to none in the qualities requisite to constitute the seaman or soldier. It was natural that he should be prejudiced in favour of his own country, and therefore unwilling to allow them an equality in respect of courage or conduct; but after that exception, not even zeal or prejudice could induce him to deny that at sea their courage and skill stood unquestioned; and that they were at least a match, if not superior, with an equality
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of force, to any other power in Europe *but* Great Britain. A Van Trump, a De Ruyter, &c. proved what heroes Holland had produced.—The people still continued the same in every respect; they possessed the same power, an internal means and resources of defending themselves, or annoying their enemies.—*Other* VAN TRUMPS might arise, and struggles and combats equally bloody, obstinate, and doubtful in the event, might be the consequence of the present measure; struggles of such a nature, and claims of victory so contrary in their nature, as not to have been determined at the end of a century which of the combatants were vanquished or worsted, or which had proved victorious.

He hoped it would not be improper to add a single word on the nature of the approaching war, as it had struck him: If our great exertions were to be directed to the defence of our south-western coasts, to the defence of our channel, and the protection of our outward and homeward-bound trade fleets, he begged to submit to their Lordships, the dangerous, at least precarious state of the eastern coasts of the kingdom. Besides the safety and security of our commerce to the Baltic, the North, and our coal trade, he submitted to their Lordships what would be the situation of the whole of the commerce carried on by the way of the Thames. Most certainly either the whole of that commerce, which included half the commerce of the whole island, must be deserted, or a squadron must constantly be stationed in the Downs, for the safety and protection of the ships passing and repassing through the mouth of that river. If then a squadron, and a squadron of considerable force must be destined for that service, it was clear that not only the present measure would add to our nominal enemies, but that it would in fact *weaken* our *efficient* defence, because it would *lock up* a part which might be otherwise employed *against France and Spain both in Europe and elsewhere.*

L O R D S' P R O T E S T.

Die Jovis 25o. Januarii, 1781.

It was moved, that the motion for an address be postponed, in order that the House may taken into consideration another motion “for an address to his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to give orders, that there be forthwith laid before this House copies of all the treaties lately subsisting between Great Britain and the States of the Seven United Provinces, and also of the correspondence between his Majesty’s ministers and his late ambassador at the Hague, and of all memorials, requisitions, manifestos, answers, and other papers which

which have passed between the two courts, as far as they relate in any respect to the present rupture, or to any misunderstanding or complaints which have existed between the two nations since the commencement of hostilities between Great Britain and the provinces of North America.

Which being objected to, after long debate, the question was put, whether to agree to the said motion?"

It was resolved in the negative.

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Dissentient,

1st. Because we cannot consent to involve this and other nations in all the horrors of war, but upon the clearest proofs both of justice and necessity; and it would be peculiarly inconsistent with our public trust, without such evidence, to give parliamentary sanction to a war against the ancient and natural allies of this nation.

It is on the justice of our cause, and on the absolute necessity of proceeding to such extremities, that we must be answerable to God and our consciences for a measure which necessarily plunges millions of innocent people in the utmost distress and misery. It is on this foundation alone that we can with confidence pray for success, or hope for the protection of Providence.

We conceive that a careful, and above all, an impartial examination of the correspondence between his Majesty's ministers and his late ambassador at the Hague, and of all the memorials, complaints, requisitions, manifestos, answers, and other papers which have passed between the two courts, as far as they relate in any respect to the present rupture, is indispensable to warrant Parliament in pronouncing whether the hostilities which his Majesty has authorised his subjects to commence against those of the Seven United Provinces are, or are not, founded in justice, and consequently before they can with propriety offer to his Majesty any advice, or promise him any assistance in the present conjuncture.

The sudden attack which the ministers have advised his Majesty to begin against the property of our neighbours, failing in full confidence of peace and of their alliance with this nation, made without allowing the usual time stipulated by treaties, even between enemies, for securing the property of unsuspecting individuals in case of a sudden rupture, is a proceeding

proceeding which, till explained, must appear unwarranted by the law of nations, and contrary to good faith; nor can we, upon the bare recommendation of ministers, approve of such a conduct, or determine upon the nice construction of treaties and reciprocal obligations, without so much as hearing what our late allies and friends have on their side to alledge.

But the influence of his Majesty's ministers in Parliament has been such, as to obtain not only the rejection of a motion which has been made for this necessary information, but also to induce this great council of the nation, on a matter deeply affecting their most important interests, to give a solemn opinion without any knowledge of the facts on which they have pronounced with so blindfold a compliance to the will of the court.

2dly, Because, however sufficient the reason of justice ought to be, that of expediency may perhaps be more prevalent, and is not wanting on this occasion.

It has been the uniform and approved policy of our ablest statesmen, for near a century, to form alliances, and to unite with the powers on the continent to resist the ambitious attempts of the House of Bourbon. The protestant republic of Holland, from the freedom of its constitution and sentiment, as well as from its religion, has ever been deemed a valuable support of the liberties of Europe. Twice have they been on the very verge of falling a sacrifice to France in this cause, and we can never believe that their old affection to Great Britain can have been alienated, much less that a direct rupture with them can have become necessary on our part, without gross mismanagement in our councils. We cannot but form the most serious apprehensions at seeing the three great Protestant and free countries of Great Britain, North America and Holland, so weakening each other by war, as to become an easy prey to the ancient enemy of them all, whenever she shall please to turn her arms against them.

We are not insensible of the distressful situation, with respect to the armed neutral powers, into which we have been led, step by step, by the unfortunate American war; but as we are convinced that wicked and weak councils have been the sole cause of that unhappy contest, so we are persuaded that honest and able ministers might have prevented this, amongst some of its wretched consequences.

But whilst the same measures, which have caused our unexampled calamities, continue to be pursued and cherished; whilst a system of corruption prevails, which must exclude
both

both ability and integrity from our councils; whilst every interest of the state is sacrificed to its support, and every attempt at reformation rejected, our condition can change, but from bad to worse.

It is not for us to pretend to foretell events, which are in the hands of Providence; but if causes are suffered to produce their natural consequences, we cannot but apprehend, from the present conduct of our affairs, every danger to this country, both foreign and domestic, to which a nation can be exposed.

RICHMOND	ROCKINGHAM
PORTLAND	DEVONSHIRE
FITZWILLIAM	PEMBROKE
HARCOURT	COVENTRY
FERRERS	

S E C O N D P R O T E S T.

Dissentient,

For the above reasons, and for that, instead of being convinced of the justice, necessity, or policy of a war with Holland, as we ought to be, before we give our sanction to that measure, it appears to us, as far as the information we possess enables us, to be equally contrary to the interests of both countries, and to the inclinations of all whose inclinations ought to influence the councils of either. Or such inclinations, in many respectable members of the Dutch government, we thought we saw, and we saw it with pleasure, a sufficient indication to encourage us to hope, that it is not yet too late to open a negotiation, by which, if conducted with the temper, and in the language of conciliation, we may avert the evils which the continuance of this unnatural war cannot fail to produce.

With this view, it was recommended in the debates with the earnestness and seriousness suitable to the occasion, not to lose an hour in proposing a cessation of hostilities with Holland, for the purpose of meeting and cultivating a friendly disposition, of reconciling commercial differences, and for restoring that union of political interests which has been hitherto thought fundamentally necessary to the preservation of the Protestant religion, and of the liberties of Europe. The inattention of his Majesty's ministers to such a proposition, in the actual circumstances of this country, their disinclination to the objects of it, so plainly manifested by the unprecedented confiscations intended by their proclamation of the 20th of December last, the loss of so valuable an ally, the accession of so considerable

considerable a force to the formidable powers, antecedently combined against us, and the just grounds it affords to apprehend the accession of other powers to that combination, leave us no other part to take, as members of this House, after having stated our ideas of the extent of the danger, and suggested what we conceive to be the best and only remedy, than to enter our solemn protest to exculpate ourselves from being accessory to that accumulation of evils, which we foresee, and think might be, but will not be prevented.

WYCOMBE

PORTLAND

CAMDEN

ROCKINGHAM

RICHMOND

FITZWILLIAM

FERRERS

PEMBROKE.*

January 26.

The House waited upon his Majesty at St. James's with the address agreed to the preceding day, and adjourned to Monday the 29th.

January 29.

His Majesty's answer to the address of Friday was reported by the Lord Chancellor. Ordered that the Bishop of St. David's be desired to preach before their Lordships at Westminster Abbey, it being the 30th of January.

January 30.

This day the Lord Chancellor and the House, consisting of two spiritual and one temporal Lord, attended divine service, and heard a sermon preached in Westminster Abbey, suitable to the occasion.

Adjourned to the next day.

January 31.

Returned thanks to the Bishop of St. David's, for the sermon preached by him the preceding day, at Westminster Abbey.

February 1.

Private business. Adjourned to the Wednesday following.

February 7.

Met, pursuant to their last adjournment.

Ordered, That the Bishop of Bangor preach before their Lordships on the day of the General Fast, at Westminster Abbey.

Adjourned to Friday.

* The division did not take place till half after one in the morning, nor did the House rise till past two.

February 9.

The other private business being finished, the order of the day was read for hearing counsel on an appeal from a decree of the present Chancellor. The cause of appeal was shortly this: A Miss Irwin, who was a ward of the court of Chancery, having received the addresses of Lord William Gordon, had consented to give him her hand, with the approbation of her guardians, and of her mother, who acted as trustees under her father's will; but the lady being under age (but twenty years old), and from certain circumstances arising from the words of the testator, her deceased father, she came by operation of law a ward of the court of Chancery, as before observed; the consequence of which was, that she could not marry Lord William without the Chancellor's consent.

On this ground the lovers, with the approbation or sanction of the parent and guardians, petitioned the Chancellor for leave to marry, which petition was heard upon the merits, and was dismissed by his Lordship, chiefly for the following reasons:

First, As it would defeat the will, under which she derived her present fortune, the intention of the testator, as the law stood, being, that the young lady should not marry, till of full age, unless the person she might intermarry with should have a suitable fortune, and that her own should be so settled, as to become a provision for herself and children, or if not, a suitable dower and provision should be settled and made for herself and children out of her husband's estate.

Secondly, (which was connected with the foregoing) Her intended husband was not enabled to make any such provision, having no property or fortune of his own.

Thirdly, That so far from being able to fulfil the intentions of the will, he was some thousand pounds worse than a beggar, which debt or debts were to be paid out of the fortune of the young lady, when she arrived at full age, as a matter of course, because her fortune would then vest in her husband.

Fourthly, It would tend to defeat the remainder, which was expectant on her death, in case she should not attain the age of twenty-one years, which gave the person in remainder a clear, legal, vested title in the contingent estate, on her death; which would be an act of positive injustice, because it would be divesting the remainder man of a reversionary, or contingent estate, without any equivalent.

And finally, it would defeat the intention, as well as legal operation of the will of the testator, and open a door to set aside or bar all such testamentary devises.

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The counsel for the appellants were Mr. Maddox and Mr. Dunning, the former went very fully into the design, motives, and policy of the marriage act, passed in the 25th of George the Second, and demonstrated very ably the singular hardships which it imposed, even when construed in the most liberal and extensive manner, but contended, however rigorous, and in many respects impolitic it might be, it was never designed or intended to vest the power exercised on the present occasion in the court below.—It was merely passed, so far as it applied in the present instance, to prevent young people from throwing themselves away, and from making a choice which was to endure for life, when the parties were not at an age fit to form a proper judgement.—But the act specially provided, that with the consent of parent and guardians, infants should always be at liberty to marry. The testator could not be ignorant of the law, and though in the present case a question arose, whether from the previous conduct of the parent, guardians, and trustees, the young lady had not become a ward of the court; it was evidently clear to him, that it was equally agreeable to the equity of that court, the law under which the court below derived its power, and justice, in the particular case before their Lordships, that the petition should be granted, and the decree or the report made by the court of Chancery remitted back to that court, or instantly reversed.

Mr. Dunning with infinite wit and ingenuity endeavoured to ridicule the new mode of courtship about to be established by the noble Lord on the woofsack, by his late decision in another place.

He contended, before that decision could have the sanction of law or justice, this proposition must be antecedently established. “That to constitute happiness in the married state, or legalize an union between a rich infant and the man she loved, an equality of fortune was indispensibly necessary.” Here the young lady publicly avowed her attachment to his client. Her mother, her only surviving parent, approved of her choice, and the guardians under the will cheerfully and without reserve consented to it.

If the court below proceeded on any solid ground, it could be only this: the preventing the young lady from taking an improper step, or if the step was proper, interfering lest the contingent interest vested in the person in remainder should be affected, contrary to the intent of the devise, as connected with the operation of law.

That young ladies, if left entirely to themselves, under the sudden impulse of love, might act imprudently, he was ready to acknowledge, and when the fact or appearances proclaimed this, the discretionary interposition of the court below was in his opinion very proper. It was clearly a wholesome exercise of the patronage, care, and protection, which the ancient law in some instances, and the legislature in a particular one, had vested in the Chancellor for the time being; but in the case before their Lordships, no fraud or imposition was pretended. The parties were all fully informed on the subject. The noble Lord, so far from wishing to impose on the young lady, her mother, or her guardians, had with all possible honour and candour, an honour and candour befitting his birth, rank, and personal character, laid his situation before them, even to the most minute particular; and yet, strange as it might sound, his openness and almost unprecedented ingenuity proved the very cause of his present embarrassment, nothing being easier, if he harboured any intention of misleading the court, than to make out a case for it, which should put an end to all future doubt, embarrassing, or enquiry.

He urged this argument in a variety of shapes, and said the question, which properly came to be argued at that bar, was clearly, by what rule she estimated her own happiness, what she was about to part with, and what to receive in return, and upon the whole, after weighing the intrinsic value of both, making her option; or whether, after the most scrupulous comparison, she would not be happier if wedded to the man she loved, than she could be with any other, however opulent, or in a single state? This was a matter, when thus considered and fully matured, which could concern her, and her only, and he had no doubt, whatever the noble Lord who presided in the court below might think on the subject, relative to persons of fortune intermarrying with persons equally wealthy, his Lordship would nevertheless agree with him, that the standard of ideal happiness, which he had measured, could not operate an inch beyond the circle of his own breast. Indeed he never understood, nor hardly ever heard, that settlements and equality of fortune served to unite hearts, though he knew in a thousand instances that they united hands.

The only point which remained to be considered, or which indeed admitted of any serious question, was this, that if permission were given to the parties to marry, that the eventual

tual interests of others who would be entitled to claim under the will, should the young lady die unmarried, might be thereby affected. To this he would answer, that when the lady should attain the age of twenty-one years, she might dispose of the fortune as she liked, and if on the dismissal of the present appeal she should marry, and have a child or children begotten during her nonage; in that event they would take and of course bar the remainder, so that in neither event would the interest of those in remainder be affected. If she married and had no child, and should die before she attained the age of twenty-one, the person or persons in remainder would take under the will; if she married under age without consent of the court of Chancery, and had children, the remainder would be barred; consequently the consent of the court was no more than a mere matter of form, for it could give or subtract nothing, nor create any estate, which was not before in being.

On the whole, as the idea of an equality of fortune seemed to him to establish a false principle of matrimonial happiness, equally repugnant to natural freedom and connubial harmony, he made no doubt but their Lordships, who were equally competent to judge with the first lawyer in the Hall, or that House, would agree to the reversal of the decree made in the court below, and give directions for a fuller consideration and for granting the prayer of the appellants petition.

The question was put, without a single word, from within the bar, and affirmed;* though the Earl of Abingdon rose and attempted to speak, but was informed, that the question was already disposed of.

The House adjourned at five o'clock to Wednesday.

* It was pretty remarkable, that within three days, one brother (Lord George Gordon) should be tried for high treason at the King's Bench bar, and the other (Lord William) be a suitor at the bar of the House of Lords to take off an interdict laid upon him by the Court of Chancery, not to marry a rich heiress, who was ready to bestow on his Lordship her heart, hand, and fortune. The former was however lucky enough to be acquitted, and the latter equally fortunate, by the young lady's bidding defiance to the trammels of law, and rendering herself and him happy a few days afterwards at Gretna Green.

February 14.

This day, as soon as the private business was over, the Lord Chief Baron delivered the opinions of eight of the judges in the case of Ambrose and Hodgson, it being an appeal from a decision of the Court of King's Bench.—The opinion of that court was affirmed on the principle that the word heirs in a testamentary devise, are words of purchase, not of limitation.

Earl of
Abingdon.

The House was about to adjourn, when Earl of *Abingdon* rose and renewed his complaint concerning the precipitation with which the House had proceeded to affirm the decree on the appeal brought before their Lordships by Lord William Gordon, as to his marriage with Miss Irwin, on Friday last. His Lordship reprobated this unjust and slovenly rapidity in terms of great asperity, and said that he intended to have troubled the House with his sentiments upon the subject, if he had not been prevented by the extraordinary and premature determination to which they had been led.

Lord Chan-
cellor.

The Lord *Chancellor* contended that the mode observed upon the occasion alluded to by his Lordship, was exactly that which was invariably practised in all similar situations. He was always happy that all the judicial proceedings which came under his cognizance, should be carefully and deliberately discussed, and he was sincerely sorry that any accidental occasion should have impeded such a discussion in the case in question.

Earl of
Abingdon.

Earl of *Abingdon* was not at all convinced that the impediment alluded to by the noble Lord on the woolfack had its origin in accident. His Lordship, he said, laboured under no defect of lungs, if he chose to exert them, and he declared upon his honour, that he had never heard him go through the usual formal form in moving the House for their opinion upon the subject then before them. A noble Duke he said had come down for the express purpose of giving his negative to the question; and he called upon the noble Duke to declare whether or no he had not been deceived by the precipitate manner in which their Lordships' supposed opinion had been taken and declared, and whether it was not every way fair to contend that it was an act clearly without the concurrence of the noble Duke and himself, and of course respecting them a nullity as members of that House?

Lord Chan-
cellor.

The Lord *Chancellor* (Lord *Thurlow*) informed the noble Lord, that he argued from a total misconception of the regular mode of proceeding in cases like that in which he complained, of improper precipitation. It was never usual in cases of appeal for
any.

any negative to be put upon a motion for affirming a decree, but if any noble Lord chose to object, the proper and established method was for him to rise up and move the House for reversing the decree in question.—Neither his Lordship, nor any other noble Lord had done that, though due time had been given for such a motion previous to the question having been put in the usual form from the woofsack, and therefore when this was ultimately put, the time was lost for urging a negative, and it would have been unsefless and superfluous in him to have stopped a moment between putting the motion for affirming the decree and ordering it, such a suspension never being the practice in similar situations.

Lord *Hillsborough* explained to the House, that he sat nearly at as great a distance from the noble Lord on the woofsack as the noble Earl who had before spoke upon this subject, and he declared that he heard the question put with all due form, and the word affirmed, pronounced in terms perfectly distinct, and in a voice perfectly audible.

Lord *Marchmont* spoke to the order of their Lordships' proceedings, and confirmed the fact, and gave a minute history of the established custom in cases similar to the present.

After some trifling conversation, Lord Abingdon suspended his complaint, and the House adjourned to the next day.

February 15.

As soon as the private business was over, the Duke of *Bolton* rose, he said, to make a motion, in consequence of the papers he moved for previous to the recess, the purport of which, he presumed, had been sufficiently explained upon a former day. (7th November 1780.) He reminded their Lordships, that he said, when he moved first for the papers, he meant that their production should lead to an enquiry into the loss of the outward-bound East and West India convoy, which was captured by the Spanish Admiral (Don Cordova) last summer. He had good reason to believe that such a disaster could not have happened but through gross neglect somewhere.

He looked upon the loss of that fleet as a very singular misfortune; and of course it was worthy of the attention of Parliament, and of importance to both Parliament and the nation, to discover the cause or causes of that fatal disaster. Neither the object of his motion, nor the mode he had struck out, was unprecedented or unusual. Government was intrusted with the protection of the state, and enabled by the nation to execute the trust reposed in it. When government therefore

therefore failed in a faithful or able discharge of its duty, ministers and every department of the executive government were responsible and amenable to Parliament. Their Lordships' journals exhibited many repeated proofs of the exercise of that controul in the reigns of Charles the First and Second, and King William and Queen Anne. He trusted, therefore, that he should not hear it objected to him, on the ground of want of usage. He still had less right to expect it; as the motion he intended to make was a matter of course, no more than to take up the papers now on the table, and in possession of the House, and referring them to a committee of the whole House. He moved, "That this House will, on Monday next, enquire into the conduct of the navy, and the cause of the loss of that valuable convoy of store-ships, victuallers, and merchant-ships, in August last."

The Earl of
Sandwich.

The Earl of *Sandwich* rose to oppose the motion. He by no means approved of the introducing into the motion an enquiry into the conduct of the navy, in the manner proposed by the noble Duke, while the motion itself imported no more than a mere enquiry into a particular transaction, the loss of the outward-bound East and West-India fleets. He had no objection to the latter part of the motion, but he thought, upon many accounts, it would be extremely improper, if not dangerous, to go into an enquiry on the former. He begged leave to assure their Lordships, that he had no fear on his own account, but in his opinion, it would be not at all prudent to lay before the public, and of course, in process of time, our enemies, the state and condition of our fleet, and every thing which directly or indirectly related to it.—As for the enquiry into the loss of the convoy, no inconvenience could now arise from any communication relative to it; and he assured the noble Duke, that, conscious of the propriety and rectitude of his own conduct, as presiding at the Admiralty-Board, he was every way ready and prepared to have that matter sifted to the bottom. He wished the noble Duke, who must know well the nature of such an enquiry as his motion imported, to consider what a variety of objects it would embrace, and what a number of documents it would call under their Lordships' consideration. No less than the number of ships, guns, men, rates, &c. nay, even their condition, state, and equipment, the very timber in the dock-yards, and every thing coming within the description of naval stores.—Under the reservation of confining the enquiry to the loss of the convoy exclusively, he begged once more to assure the noble Duke he had not the least objection.

Duke

. Duke of *Bolton* replied, that his motion was not meant to bring on a general enquiry into the state of the navy—It was only directed to a particular transaction, specifically pointed out, and depending solely on the papers laid on their Lordships' table before Christmas. When he therefore moved the words, conduct of the navy, he only inserted them in his motion to enable him to go into the subject which was to come under their Lordships' consideration. The purport of his motion was simply this—to enquire into the conduct of the navy, so far as it related to the loss of the convoy. The noble Earl should know that such an introduction was necessary; and to convince his Lordship that his motion imported no more, he was willing either to alter it himself, or to acquiesce in whatever amendment the noble Earl should propose, in order to remove the objection of a general enquiry into the navy. He could hardly have imagined, when he first rose, that the noble Earl would have taken the ground he did.—He presumed, when the noble Earl not only acquiesced in the motion, at the time it was first made, but in a manner made it his own, by moving and carrying an amendment, that he could not afterwards with propriety be to oppose it, or, which was worse, endeavour obliquely to defeat it. The noble Lord anticipates the conduct of others, by pointing out what he would do himself. The conduct of the navy, says his Lordship, includes every thing belonging to the navy;—certainly every part of it which applies to the loss of the convoy, and no more.—He wished, however, that noble Lords would only attend for an instant; for by the same mode of arguing every circumstance or question relative to the loss of the convoy, if the motion were worded in that way, the noble Lord would defeat by answering, or rather preventing any answer being given, by saying, that the question, though it related to the loss likewise, went to an enquiry into the conduct of the navy.—Thus, under the semblance of an enquiry, all information, at least, such information as would enable their Lordships to determine, whether there was any blame incurred, and by whom, would be either withheld, smothered, or evaded. How it was possible to proceed, unless the motion went in the form he had drawn it up, he was at a loss to conceive; and why it might not go in that form he could not tell,—it could disclose no secret; it would do no harm; it could convey no improper information to our enemies. The noble Lord indeed confessed as much: but he could perceive the noble Earl was sore; the conduct of the navy, and every

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Duke of
Bolton.

circumstance belonging to it, created an alarm in the noble Earl's breast.—The noble Lord did not want to be told, that it was not his intention to go at large into the subject of the state of naval affairs;—he meant only to go into so much of it as related to the loss of the convoy; consequently, if the noble Lord was serious in his objection, he had his free leave and consent to modify it in such a manner as to entirely remove all objection, by restraining the motion to the capture of the convoy.

The Earl of
Sandwich.

The Earl of *Sandwich* remarked, that when he said he had no objection to the latter part of the noble Duke's motion, he by no means wished to be understood as approving of it, and the reason he had was this—Captain Moutray was liable to be tried for the loss of the convoy; and if the present proposed enquiry was to go on, and any decision should take place, their Lordships might think him guilty or innocent, though a court martial might think otherwise. He did assure the noble Duke he had no manner of objection on his own account. The Admiralty, he would be bound to maintain, had performed their duty; but he would be sorry that the House should come to any prejudgment on the conduct of an absent officer, who would be brought to trial regularly, in the way of his profession: if their Lordships should, however, determine otherwise, he would cheerfully acquiesce. At all events, in the form the present motion was framed, it was impossible he could give it his assent. The motion, was to be sure general in words, but was nevertheless specific in its object—no less than an enquiry into the conduct of the navy—and the loss, &c.

Here the first part of the paragraph took in the whole of the navy, and every thing belonging to it, number of ships, men, guns, rates, stations, even to an account of the stores, and the quantity of timber in the yards, &c. On this ground he should set his face against any modification of the motion, unless the first part of it was left out, nor did he think that even the latter part of it was regular. The noble Duke before Christmas moved for some papers [Admiral Geary's and Captain Moutray's letters]; the proper and regular motion, therefore, in his opinion, was neither the conduct of the navy, nor even the loss of the convoy, but to move that their Lordships be summoned upon a certain day for the purpose of taking those papers into consideration.

The Duke
Bolton.

The Duke of *Bolton* said he was not surprized that the noble Lord had so suddenly shifted his ground, and fled from
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and deserted his first argument; that it would be improper at this juncture to go into an enquiry into the conduct of the navy; for it was now evident that his Lordship was determined to shrink from all enquiry, and particularly into one which might be the means of satisfying their Lordships that the loss of the convoy arose from the criminal neglect or ignorance of the admiralty board. The noble Lord was conscious, that if the able and honest officer who commanded the grand fleet last summer was brought to that bar, he would deliver testimony which would prove the total ignorance of those to whom the direction of naval affairs was committed. He would prove that they gave such orders as no man ought to obey, or could understand. It would appear of a piece with all the rest of their conduct, with their giving orders to the late Sir Charles Hardy, with forty ships of the line under his command, to fly from an enemy very little superior, in the very channel. An enquiry into the conduct of the navy would disclose the reasons which suggested the disgraceful measure of our fleet which was sent out last winter in order to intercept the France convoy, to wait for the enemy till they got a sight of them, and instantly fly into port from them, and leave our own returning East India fleet to the mercy of the enemy, or to the mere chance of a fortunate mistake. These were matters that would, and must be enquired into at some future day; and he was not surprized that his Lordship should express so much anxiety to defeat any measure or motion which might lead that way.

The Earl of *Sandwich* was much pleased, he said, to find that he had discovered the drift and tendency of the noble Duke's motion. What fell from the noble Duke in his last speech put it beyond question that his intention was by a side wind to lead their Lordships into an enquiry into the conduct of the navy, under a pretext of enquiring into the causes of the loss of the convoy. His Grace now acknowledged that he meant to bring a very respectable officer [Geary] to their Lordships' bar, and he presumed all the other officers he had mentioned. He would never sit silent and hear any officer's conduct arraigned. There was not an abler nor a braver officer in the service than he whom the noble Duke represented as flying into port as soon as he descried the enemy (Darby) he was sent to wait for. That officer never fled from the enemy, nay, never kept out of their way, nor avoided them. Neither had he ever got sight of them, though some of the frigates belonging to his squadron, detached for the purpose of descri-

The Earl of
Sandwich.

ing them, had. He kept the sea, and of course he did not dishonour the flag. It is true that perhaps he did not seek them, and he acted right, considering the great disparity of force. When Admiral Darby got a sight of the enemy, his squadron consisted of but seventeen, whereas the French consisted of thirty-eight, if not forty-four ships of the line. Was his not endeavouring to compel the enemy to come to an engagement with such an inferior force, any disgrace or neglect of duty? He trusted it could not be deemed so; but on the contrary, reflected the highest honour on the officer who had at once the prudence and resolution neither to rashly precipitate an engagement under such manifest disadvantages, and resolution and gallantry to put himself in the way of an enemy so vastly superior, and not decline the combat.

Lord Stormont.

Lord *Stormont* said, he did not mean to rise upon the present occasion, because he looked upon the motion which the noble Duke intended to make as no other than a motion of course, to take the papers moved for before the recess off the table. Such being the case, he owned he was astonished to hear the noble Duke enlarge his motion, or rather to make one essentially different from that, which their Lordships presumed, they were summoned to discuss; and he believed, except the noble Duke himself, and such noble Lords as his Grace might have thought proper to communicate his intention to, there was not a noble Lord present who was, or could be apprized, that a motion merely for a particular paper, or letter, meant to include an enquiry into the conduct of the navy, and the vast mass of information such an enquiry would draw after it.—The proper motion therefore, in his apprehension, would be, to order that said papers or letters be taken into consideration on such a day—whatever day the noble Duke shall or may think proper to propose.

The Lord Chancellor.

The Lord *Chancellor* was of opinion that neither of the noble Peers who had spoken was in the right on this occasion. The objection that had been urged by the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty against the motion, which was in the possession of their Lordships, was certainly not a good one, for it could not be for a moment supposed that the noble Duke could derive any power of entering into a general enquiry into the state of the navy from the terms of his motion, because he had not only already explained his particular object in the institution of this enquiry, but had expressed what was the sole motive and object of making the motion at the time. Under these circumstances, the noble Duke must have

have been conscious that he could have no power of commencing an indiscriminate investigation in consequence of a motion so limited in its form. But though this was in his idea no valid objection to the enquiry in question, there was another very substantial one, and that was, that such an enquiry was intirely premature as to the time of its being instituted: it would at present be a very unjust and unpardonable anticipation of another and more solemn enquiry, a legal enquiry into the conduct of the captain who had the command at the time that this fleet was captured.—He understood that Captain Moutray was to be tried for his behaviour on this occasion, and it would be totally inconsistent with the justice of that House to proceed to a decision upon a subject which might, in its consequences, affect the ultimate judgment that was to be entertained by a regular court martial concerning that officer. If, after that House had gone thro' their enquiry, and had come to a resolution in consequence, that the guilt in this transaction belonged to a quarter which Capt. Moutray was not at all concerned in, then they would be suspending the natural operation of a judicial enquiry, by their anticipation; for it would seem absurd to try Capt. Moutray, after the first court of judicature in the kingdom had, by a serious and solemn decision, pronounced him totally innocent. If, on the contrary, they should at the termination of the inquiry wished for by the noble Duke, declare that the principal guilt was chargeable to the officer, he would be subjected to the misfortune of going to a trial in which his fortune, character, and life, were concerned, with all the weight of such a high authority against him, and with every prejudice and bias that such a decision would naturally carry with it. On this account, therefore, he held it quite improper to prosecute the enquiry moved for by the noble Duke; but he wished it to be understood as his opinion in general, that the noble Lords were extremely mistaken if they supposed they possessed a right of bringing every little occurrence under a parliamentary examination.—If this were the case, if every trifling loss which occurred in the unavoidable chance of war, were to be brought before that high tribunal, there was an end to executive government, it could proceed no farther; the political machine must stop, and the business of the kingdom must stand still.—But that was by no means the case; for in his opinion no doctrine could be at once more impolitic, and more unconstitutional than the establishment of such a power in either of the deliberative branches of the legislature.

ture. All that could be done at any rate in the present instance, was to move for a day for the papers which had already been laid before their Lordships to be read, as it was impossible they could in the natural course of things proceed to build an enquiry upon any papers which had never been previously read to them. He for his own part had not perused the papers which had been laid before the House in consequence of the noble Duke's motion, and was not therefore competent to speak or determine concerning any subsequent motion which might be founded upon them.—Other Lords might possibly be in the same predicament, and it would of course be altogether improper for them to accede to any thing else in the present stage of the business, but to the appointment of some future day for having the contents of the papers in question properly and carefully read to them.

Ld. Dudley Lord *Dudley* said, he objected to the motion when it was first made, because he foresaw it would lead to the very discussion the noble Duke now apparently wished to bring forward, that of an enquiry into the conduct of the navy, and of course into that of the admiralty board——He saw the motion in another point of view, that of leading to a judgment or opinion upon the professional conduct of an able officer; in either event, whether as leading the House into a tedious, and in every sense, a very improper discussion, in the present critical state of public affairs, or coming to a decision upon the conduct of Captain Moutray, he thought the motion, made by the noble Duke, every way improper, ill-timed as to the season, and unparliamentary as to the proceeding, because possibly productive of injustice and pre-judgment.

Duke of Bolton.

The *Duke of Bolton* observed, that the argument urged by the learned and noble Lord went rather too far for the use he obviously intended it. The learned Lord contended that their Lordships ought not to interfere in the conduct of the executive government upon every occasion.—He was ready to acquiesce in the general position.—It would indeed be productive of nothing but inconvenience and confusion, if that House was to interfere, or attempt to controul government upon every occasion;—but when he acknowledged this, he was ready to maintain, that circumstances sometimes arose, in which it was the duty of that House to controul the exercise of the executive government; and when it would be highly criminal in their Lordships to neglect it.—There was indeed another reason, which the noble and learned Lord forgot

got to mention, and which would render the matter totally impracticable, or the task endless; for if their Lordships were to take up and enquire into every absurd and foolish measure adopted by ministers, Parliament would have nothing else to do from day to day, but to enquire and to censure or punish the public delinquents.—The whole attention of their Lordships would have constant food for animadversion, and that of the most severe and unpleasant nature, were it to be taken up with remarks, upon even the tenth part of the omissions, blunders, and the gross wilful neglects with which ministers were justly chargeable.—Therefore, though the noble and learned Lord's position might be extremely true, that it was not fit that Parliament should interfere upon every neglect or omission of duty, this position was equally founded, that there might many circumstances arise in the exercise of executive government, which if Parliament neglected to take notice of, they would be highly censurable.

He maintained that the admiralty board were highly culpable; that they neither knew how to draw up instructions, so as to render them intelligible, or, when they did, that they were such as were or ought to be obeyed. The noble Earl knew this to be the case when the Channel Squadron was last at sea—councils of war had been frequently held to decypher the instructions under which the admiral acted; but in vain; no man could make them out. Far be it from him, as had been insinuated by the noble Earl, to lay any blame to admiral Darby; he never thought of it. He only stated a fact, which every man was at liberty to argue upon who heard it; and the noble Earl's own confession clearly exculpated the admiral; it would have been rashness in the extreme; it would have been madness in the admiral to have acted in any other manner than as he did. But he foresaw that the enquiry was to be defeated at all events; Capt. Moutray's trial was the pretext. He believed that officer would never be tried; and thus the justice of the nation would be evaded, as the captain would be loaded with the implied blame, and stand as a screen between the nation and the admiralty board.

The Earl of *Sandwich* in reply said, it was the intention of the admiralty board to bring the captain as speedily as possible to a court martial? orders had been sent some time since to his commander in chief, Sir Peter Parker, to bring him to a trial; and probably before now his trial was over, and he would be honourably acquitted. He knew there was no blame due to Captain Moutray; he was equally satisfied in respect of the admiralty board; and when he opposed the noble Duke's

The Earl of
Sandwich.

Duke's motion, he assured his Grace he had done so from no other motive but merely to prevent the possible clashing of opinion between that House and the court martial who may have tried him.

The Mar-
quis of
Rocking-
ham.

The Marquis of *Rockingham* was very severe on the noble Lord who spoke last; reminding him of his former promises of pledging himself repeatedly to that House of having a fleet equal, if not superior, to the united force of France and Spain, and yet acknowledging in the face of the nation that the enemy out-numbered us in the proportion of more than two to one; stating that Admiral Darby had under his command but seventeen, while the French fleet consisted of thirty eight, if not forty-four of the line.

Earl of
Sandwich.

The Earl of *Sandwich* said, that this arose from accident; that the fleet, when riding at Torbay, consisted of twenty-seven, four of whom, a first rate and three other large ships, were disabled in a violent gale of wind; that another, the *Alexander*, commanded by Lord Longford, lost her mast, and that five more had separated and returned into port; consequently, though Admiral Darby had no more than seventeen under his command, he would, but for those unfortunate circumstances, have had twenty-seven.

The Mar-
quis of
Rocking-
ham.

The Marquis of *Rockingham* made a short reply. He said this was a confessed inferiority of fifteen sail of the line; an inferiority so great as not to be supplied by any exertions of skill or courage: he recommended to the noble Duke to withdraw his motion, as it was in vain to expect to derive any advantage from that or any other motion. That side of the House had continued to predict consequences till all further efforts were ineffectual. They would not be agreed to; and if they were, he expected very little if any good from them. He feared the nation was ruined beyond redemption; and such being his opinion, he should give himself no farther trouble.

Duke of
Bolton.

The Duke of *Bolton* retorted upon the Earl of Sandwich, ridiculed the idea of numbering ships who had never gone to sea, and said, the noble Lord might as well count those on the stocks, as these that were obliged to go into dock to repair the damages they received in Torbay. This species of the possible, the probable, he might indeed call it the improbable, recalled to his mind the old story; if such a thing happened—such another might have happened; and then such a consequence would or might have followed—the simile pursued further would sound rather coarse; but certainly the string of suppositions, which had been stated
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by the noble Earl, was equally ludicrous, extravagant, and improbable. It was the duty of the first Lord of the Admiralty to provide against accidents of this nature, and if he had not men and ships, at least to have ships ready to receive men upon such an occasion. The want of the *Alexander* should likewise be supplied in the same manner. In short, the whole of the noble Lord's argument came to this, that twenty-two sail went out under Admiral Darby (he believed but twenty-one) and that four or five of these returned into port for want of proper instructions; but supposing they had all kept company, there were twenty-two British sent out to encounter forty-four French and Spanish—thirty-eight French, and six Spanish, his Lordship having acknowledged that six Spanish came to convoy the French to a certain latitude. From this public confession, he left it to their Lordships to judge how far the noble Earl, at the head of the Admiralty, had kept his faith with Parliament, after so repeatedly assuring it, that he would have at all times a fleet, if not superior, at least equal to cope with the united force of the House of Bourbon.

But it was not even the inferiority of the force for which ministers or the noble Earl were so much to blame. It was the injudicious employment of the force we had. During the Summer we had nothing, or next to nothing, to apprehend from France: the Brest Squadron was not in force or condition to venture to sea in a body. They found themselves obliged to detach in single ships, in order to collect a force at Cadiz sufficient to secure and protect their trade fleets, in their return home, and to draw the attention of the British Squadron to the southward. If therefore Admiral Geary had been ordered to cruze off, and to the southward of Cape St. Vincent's, and so pass the land latitudes, instead of Capes Ortugal and Finisterre, one of these two things would have happened, either Don Cordova would not have ventured out of Cadiz, or, if he had, he would be obliged to fight for that convoy which he captured without firing a single shot!—Cordova had but thirty ships under his command. Mr. Geary had twenty-eight, at least with the *Ramilies*; and from the condition of the fleet, consisting of three three-deckers, and nine seconds, besides the rest all seventy-fours, one sixty-four excepted, it was reasonable to hope with such a force, that if a decisive victory would not have been the consequence, there was every fair expectation of our being able to give an extreme good account

of the enemy, and at all events, of protecting that convoy, the loss of which he feared would prove so fatal to this country. He assured the noble Earl, that although he wished to call Mr. Geary to that bar, he, by no means intended to go at large into the conduct of the navy, yet he was free to acknowledge that in seeking the cause of the disaster alluded to, it would be necessary to ask that able and upright officer some questions; such he believed, if permitted to be put and answered, as would fully convince their Lordships that the instructions under which that officer acted were founded in ignorance, absurdity, and contradiction, and were the sole occasion of that mischief which afterwards happened, he meant the total loss of that valuable convoy, the most valuable in some respects this country ever lost; and that independent of the mere loss of property, on two special accounts; first, because it deprived our squadrons on the Jamaica, and Leeward Island stations of those stores in which they stood so eminently in need of; and secondly, because it was the means of furnishing an enemy with those very stores, a supply they could not procure but with great difficulty or risque in any other manner, at least not for the purpose of immediate out-fit and equipment.

Nor was the conduct of the latter part of the campaign less pregnant with proofs of ignorance and incapacity. The noble Earl, with a degree of great affected industry, had endeavoured to wipe away the censures supposed to be hinted or insinuated against the characters of the two officers who occupied successively the chief command of the western squadron.—His Lordship might have spared himself the trouble, and have taken some other more fit and convenient opportunity to make the eulogium of those two gentlemen, and would besides have acted with more candour, had he confined himself merely to panegyric, without insinuating that the panegyric contained a reply to some obloquy attempted to be thrown on the admirals Geary and Darby.—With the former he had been long acquainted, and entertained a very high esteem for him, as a man, and respect, as an officer. He knew his abilities, his courage, and intrepidity; and retained no doubt but he had faithfully and ably discharged his duty. Of Mr. Darby he knew but little, of his own personal knowledge; but from what he could learn, he believed him to be an able and active officer. As to the observations which fell from his Lordship in the course of the
debate,

debate, they evidently bore no relation to the professional conduct of either Mr. Geary or Mr. Darby; they were directed against the Admiralty Board, which issued the orders, or drew up the instructions, under which those officers respectively acted. When, therefore, he talked of Mr. Darby's going out at an improper season, or having been obliged to return into port, he never intended to cast the least reflection upon him. It was the Admiralty Board who had sent him out with a force so totally inferior to that of the enemy, which inferiority was the cause of that gentleman's being obliged to avoid the enemy, and having been in the end under the necessity of abandoning the protection of that very fleet he was sent out to see safe into port, he meant the East-Indiamen, which were then daily expected to arrive in some port in Great Britain or Ireland.

To point out those omissions and neglects, from the very mouths of the persons concerned, was the motive he had for troubling their Lordships on the present occasion. That could not be expected in any other manner, but by enlarging the motion, unless the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty would pledge himself to that House, that all the circumstances respecting the capture of the convoy were permitted to be fairly gone into, and discussed. That the noble Earl did not seem willing to agree to; and he was not surpris'd. It was an additional proof of his foresight and precaution; he dreaded the consequences of a fair and impartial investigation; he was conscious that it would exhibit nothing but a succession of blunders, mistakes, and contradictions. One day, do this; the next, do that; the third, an order for countermanding the preceding; by which means, the officers who acted, or rather attempted to act, under such instructions, had no specific object held out to them, and were at the same time deprived of every aid drawn from their own knowledge and experience, having no liberty to conduct themselves agreeably to their own judgment or discretion, and according to time, circumstance, and opportunity. Thus it was, that when the fleet was last out, the rendezvous being changed, after the five ships parted company, they were not able afterwards to rejoin, but were necessarily obliged to return into port. So it happened in a later instance. Councils of war were held to interpret the Admiralty instructions, but in vain; in fine, such a mixture of folly and confidence was never exhibited in a naval administration in this country since the foundation of the monarchy, as had been within a very few months. He saw, however, that, if he persisted in his motion, it would answer

no purpose; for which reason, he should follow the advice of his noble friend, [Rockingham] and withdraw it; though he did not in the least despair, but the time would shortly arrive when not a partial, but a full inquiry would be made by their Lordships into the conduct of the navy.

February 16.

Appeal from Ireland: Cranbrafil against Taylor. Question. Whether his Lordship, as Chief Remembrancer of the Exchequer in Ireland, was entitled to privilege, as an officer of the court? Determined in the negative, and the decree of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland affirmed.

Adjourned to Monday.

February 19.

NEW DOCTRINE of DIVORCES.

The order of the day, for the second reading of Gooche's divorce bill.

The abstract of the evidence, on which the divorce was prayed, was as follows: A disagreement having taken place at Bath, in the year 1778, relative to an improper familiarity between one Ruzzini, an Italian *castrato*-singer, Mr. and Mrs. Gooche agreed to live separate; in consequence of which the latter went to reside in France upon a separate maintenance.

There the lady had not long resided before it was generally understood, or wished for, between the parties, to take the necessary measures for separating for life.

The first fruit of those measures, as it came out in evidence, was, that her servant, a French woman, came over the next year, and a regular divorce or separation, *à mensa et thoro*, being sued in Doctor's-commons, her woman gave such testimony of the criminal familiarity of her mistress with several French officers in divers places, that the parties were divorced.

It however came out, in cross examination at the bar, that this evidence, or more properly speaking, the testimony of a single witness, was not deemed sufficient for a divorce, to be sanctioned by the legislature, to enable the parties to marry again; on which, the servant woman returned to France, and in a short time afterwards it was so managed that a cook in the house at Calais, where Mrs. Gooche lodged, was called up one night, at eleven o'clock, apparently with a view to be present when Mrs. Gooche was in bed with a French officer.

The facts of criminal commerce, here mentioned, were the grounds of the present application; and the order of the day was read for the second reading of the bill.

At

The Lord
Chancellor.

As soon as the written and parole evidence was finished, the Lord Chancellor (Lord Thurlow) came from the woolfack, and spoke to the following effect: His Lordship observed, that when persons came for redress to that House, in matters respecting property, and when the event of the application affected themselves solely and exclusively, it had been the established usage to qualify their claims, or concede or interchange their rights and possessions, as choice or convenience might suggest, no persons having a right to complain where no injury could happen; but if an individual, no matter of what description or condition, from the prince to the meanest subject, sought favour or redress, the case was very different when the property or personal rights of other persons came to be affected. Here their Lordships were called upon to perform an act of duty, which no external consideration or motive could justify in neglecting or dispensing with: here they were called upon to interpose their authority, and to exercise that power with which they were invested by the constitution, as the guardians of the rights and properties of those committed to their care and protection; and to take care that no private concert or agreement between parties should affect those who were not properly, or in person, before the House, so as in the end to be productive of private injury or public mischief.

It was upon this principle, he conceived, when applications, such as the present, were made, that their Lordships had been at all times specially careful to see that they did not originate in collusion, nor spring from motives, which, if gratified, might be productive of evil example, and operate as an encouragement to a general corruption of morals among persons of a certain rank, condition, or ability.

Cases sometimes happened, he was ready to acknowledge, in which the parties applying had come as petitioners to their Lordships, by mutual consent; and yet, such agreement not amount to what he meant to describe by that species of collusion which he wished to discourage, he meant, where the criminality preceded any knowledge of the guilt, and where the discovery of the commission of the criminal act was accidental. Yet, when the discovery was incomplete, in the first instance, and means had been devised by the consent of the parties, to furnish more relative and fuller proof, he must confess he retained his doubts even of that species of collusion; for it would be extremely difficult for their Lordships, sitting as legislators in that House, to be satisfactorily informed at what time the collusion commenced, or whether the same means

means of collusion, which laterally furnished the complete evidence, might not have been still pushed a little farther, and have suggested that which appeared incomplete.

The present case, when fully sifted, he feared would be found to be pushed still one step farther than the last he had mentioned; for, by the evidence delivered at the bar, no criminal act was so much as suggested previous to Mrs. Gooche's retiring to France, and living in a state of separation from her husband. It is true, the disagreement arose at Bath, in 1778; but no charge of criminality is mentioned till some months after she arrived at Calais or Boulogne. This implicated doubts of a very suspicious nature, because in his apprehension it amounted fairly to this; that when disagreements arise in the married state, no matter from what cause, or squabbles however trifling in their nature, all the parties had to do would be to separate, and the wife to gratify herself, or perhaps pretend to gratify herself, in order to furnish proofs sufficient to enable both parties to marry again.

Were their Lordships to give way, under the circumstances he had described, it would defeat the avowed purposes for which the relief was sought, and the only purposes to effect which it ought to be granted. It would open a door to every species of this sort of criminal gratification. It would cut asunder the most endearing ties of relationship, it would operate as an encouragement to immoralities of the most disgraceful nature, and poison the fountains of domestic felicity. It would hold out temptations to those who had nothing to regret in the married state, but that they were not single, to get rid of those restraints arising from their situation, by acts which would, in fact, render them unfit for any honourable connection, unless upon a false principle of honour in their supposed or pretended seducers.

To apply the general argument, with which he had presumed to trouble their Lordships, it would not be impertinent or foreign to the subject to corroborate what he now offered, as applied to the case before the House, to what had come out in evidence at the bar.

"Frances Portia, the cook, who had been called in as an auxiliary evidence to make out a case fit for your Lordships consideration, tells you, she was called up at eleven o'clock at night, by Mrs. Gooche, at Rigourd's, at Calais; for what purpose? to be a witness of seeing Dufmeneil and Mrs. Gooche in bed together; and, upon farther inquiry, what more did she tell your Lordships? that in a subsequent discourse, I believe the next morning, Mrs. Gooche told the witness, the

that the motive which induced her to call her up was, to give evidence of the fact in England."

"If your Lordships will attend to the testimony of Berthould, the companion and servant, she tells you, that she lived at Chelsea, with Mrs. Gooche, where she hired herself, and afterwards accompanied her mistress to Calais, Boulogne, St. Omer's, and back again to Calais; and that in each place she was a witness to several criminal acts with the several French officers, whose name she has mentioned. She has not stopped there, she has accompanied the relation of the fact with the avowed motives of her mistress for committing it; for she says, her mistress informed her at the time of her intentions; nay more, before they departed from England, explained to her, what she intended by her proposed residence in France; adding, when in France, as in the case of Portia, that she [Berthould] would be called upon as a witness in England.

"Berthould accordingly returned to England, and gave evidence in Doctor's commons, by the directions of her mistress, and to whom did she apply? to Mr. Woodcock, Mr. Gooche's agent, who supported her, furnished her with money, and paid her her wages, &c. Berthould, in her return to France, informs her mistress of what had happened. She is accompanied by Panchaud, Mr. Gooche's servant, who, instructed by Mr. Woodcock, brought over Frances Portia, the cook, to complete the evidence, which Mr. Woodcock deemed incomplete to support a bill for leave to marry again, though fully competent to ground a divorce, *à mensa et thero*, in Doctor's-commons upon. It is true, Mr. Woodcock, on whose veracity your Lordships, upon my own knowledge, may with safety depend, says, Mr. Gooche was not privy to any part of the transaction, till after Berthould returned; but I would submit it to your Lordships, whether or not, as there was no evidence of Mrs. Gooche's criminal conduct, previous to her departure for France, and as her conduct in France seemed to be predetermined, or preconcerted, before her departure from England, by the intimation given by her to Berthould before she left it, the present case, under these described circumstances, does not amount to a direct or implied preconcert to get rid of each other at all events, however disgraceful it might turn out to themselves, their immediate family, friends, and connections?"

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His Lordship said, he was satisfied that Mr. Gooche had been extremely unfortunate, the criminality of his wife having been proved beyond the possibility of doubt; but still it was equally evident, upon the face of the evidence, that the acts of infidelity were all proved to have been subsequent to the intention of one, if not both parties, to dissolve the bands of matrimony, in order to marry again.

In that point of view the case struck him, and as such, agreeably to his judgment, it came within the general exception which their Lordships had marked out when no other reason was urged but the bare proof of criminality. Were the present bill to pass upon the idea of redress, where the injury proceeded from a preconcert between the parties themselves, and had been committed by previous consent, it would, as he had already observed, open a door to every species of immorality, to private criminal gratification, to public prostitution.

He had since he enjoyed the honour of a seat in that House steadily set his face against every attempt of the kind, and ever would. The present case, he confessed, in some respects, was a hard one, but it was not so severe as it might appear, because it was not merely accidental, but fictitious. The question, however, could not be considered any farther than it appeared from the evidence delivered at the bar. In that point of view, he had already fully considered it, and in that only could it now be properly decided upon.

For his part, he never would consent to the second reading of the bill, under the impressions he received from the evidence now delivered; and if a motion should be made to that effect, he would find himself under an indispensable necessity of saying, "Not content." Yet, as there appeared to him to be peculiar hardships in the present case; and as they seemed to be so considered by several of their Lordships, who had heard the evidence, he was ready to consent, for one, that the farther consideration of the business should be deferred to some future day, as time and opportunity might suggest; suppose till Monday next.

The House adjourned, at six o'clock, till Wednesday.

February 21.

This day the Lord Chancellor and the House heard divine service in Westminster-abbey, it being the day appointed, as a general fast, to implore success to his Majesty's arms; where a sermon was preached by the bishop of Bangor.—Adjourned to Monday.

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February 26.

The postponed order of the day for the second reading of Gooche's divorce-bill being read, the *Bishop of St. David's* (Dr. Warren) said, he begged leave to make a few general observations, as well on the bill itself as in reference to what fell from the noble lord on the woollack the last day the bill was taken into consideration. He informed their Lordships, that he had paid particular attention to the evidence delivered on the subject then before the House, and although he entertained the highest respect for every word that the noble and learned lord on the woollack delivered on any subject in debate, yet in this matter it appeared to him, that there were very substantial grounds for differing in opinion with the sentiments which the learned lord expressed on Monday last. He observed there was no general rule without an exception; and, consequently, that the present case might come within that exception. Divorces were, it is true, of a very tender nature, and ought not to be granted on slight occasions, or whereby a collusion of the parties, the great moral obligation they had entered into might be frustrated without legal cause. He reminded the House, that the evidence delivered at the bar on Monday last amounted to a full proof of Mrs. Gooche's criminality antecedent to any constructive collusion that had been adduced between the parties. The wife's scandalous and profligate conduct had been fully proved to the House, but on the part of the husband not a particular was hinted, which could lead to a single circumstance that there had been in his conduct the smallest deviation from conjugal fidelity. This was a point which he observed was well worthy of their Lordships consideration. He said it would be a hard case indeed; where so much guilt appeared on one side, and so much virtue on the other, that because the wife wished to be separated the husband should be bound to continue in matrimonial bonds, merely to add actual punishment to implied disgrace. He beseeched their Lordships to take the petitioner's case into a favourable consideration, which they must certainly do if they paid proper attention to the circumstances on which the divorce was prayed. It was a petition founded on the strongest evidence of Mrs. Gooche's having defiled the marriage bed not in one, but in multifarious instances. He had known Mr. Gooche from his infancy, and he could aver upon his own knowledge that his private and public character were unexceptionable. His case was an unhappy one, and from the misery of his present

situation, he could only be relieved by their Lordships. He was ready to acknowledge, that the House and the public at large lay under very singular obligations to the noble lord ~~on~~ the woolstack for his very laudable endeavours to establish a certain established species of relief, in all cases, where the parties were fairly entitled to come to Parliament; and he trusted that none of their Lordships, however presumptuous it might appear in him to say so, more earnestly or anxiously wished than himself to see a regulation, such as had been hinted by the noble and learned lord the last day, take place.

If this sound, safe doctrine was resorted to, as the unerring standard of their Lordships proceedings, in the present instance he thought himself justified in applying the rule to the case before their Lordships. There could not remain, in the breast of any one of their Lordships a single doubt, he presumed, but that the infamy of Mrs. Gooche had been established by the most irrefragable evidence. It was no less manifest, that the avowed promulgation of the act proved, that besides the mere vicious gratification, she looked farther; for she was not satisfied to be criminal, but she seemed desirous to proclaim and make it known, and for what reason? Clearly to lay a foundation for dissolving the bands of matrimony. He was, so far as the argument applied to the guilty person (for otherwise it would be equally monstrous, absurd, and unjust to punish one person for the guilt of another) ready to accede to the doctrine laid down by the noble and learned lord, that the committing a criminal act, with an intention of dissolving the bands of matrimony, should always preclude the person so offending from any advantage they might promise themselves to derive from it.

Apply this doctrine in its general sense, or confine it to the particular subject under their Lordships consideration, and it would preclude Mrs. Gooche from availing herself of her own wrong, though the person injured could not, or ought not, to suffer by her misconduct. The motive which induced her to act as she did, would be defeated, and strict and exemplary justice would be dealt out to both parties, while the noble and learned lord's ideas would be perfectly fulfilled, namely, doing justice to the innocent, and punishing the guilty, by withholding from her the object which she meant to obtain.

By what was proved at the bar it appeared, that the lady had acted spontaneously, as inclination prompted, and as her wishes and expectations led. Of this it likewise appeared that her husband was totally ignorant till the injury had been frequently repeated; consequently, in this infant stage of
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the business there could be no pre-concert or collusion between them. Nor was there the least suggestion, that he recollected, of any communication between Mrs. Gooche and Mr. Gooche's agent, Mr. Woodcock, till after the return of Berthould the first time from France, when she was called upon to prove the adulterous acts committed by her mistress in France, when examined at Doctors-commons.

The collusion being therefore out of the question, as applying to the first acts of criminality committed in France, as proved by Berthould, the present bill might receive their Lordships sanction; and still the principle laid down by the noble Lord on the woolfack be strictly and rigidly adhered to, that of discouraging and preventing, by every possible means, the guilty party of profiting of their own guilt, or of involving the innocent in the punishment only due to themselves.

On the principle so ably stated by the learned lord on Monday he should move, that the bill, after being read a second time, be committed, for the purpose of new framing it agreeably to that principle, and the special circumstances which took it out of that general rule; in order on one hand to do justice to her much injured husband, and on the other, to deprive her of those advantages which she hoped to derive from her misconduct.

There was one great evil, which arose from collusive or preconcerted agreements of the nature alluded to, that the wife was generally rewarded for her infidelity, and by the expectation of various kinds which were held out, was thereby tempted to do what perhaps she would never otherwise have thought of, had not she a moral certainty of getting rid of the man whom she had ill-treated, and under these impressions bettering her situation, by an ample separate provision.

He spoke, he said, with great diffidence upon a subject in some respects so foreign to his habits, studies, and pursuits; he meant, so far as matters of this kind were connected with questions of property or civil judicature; but he hoped he could not err in point of intention, when his sole and primary object was impartial and indifferent justice. On these motives, and on this principle, and in this persuasion, while he totally disapproved, and in that so far agreed with the noble lord on the woolfack of holding out encouragement to married persons, much less to one of the parties exclusively, to commit adulterous acts, he thought it would be adding actual injury to real misfortune, that the unfaithful wife

should profit by her infidelity, so far as to put herself by her crimes in a better situation, or at least a more-desirable one to her, at the expence of the party injured; an unfortunate, and perhaps doubly so, because an affectionate Husband.

The Lord
Chancellor.

The Lord Chancellor rose in reply. He assured their Lordships, that when, on a former occasion, he made use of the word collusion, he did not mean to use it with technical strictness; the term was sufficiently expressive of the idea annexed to it, to render all verbal criticism unnecessary. And still whatever light the transaction may have appeared to the learned prelate, he was yet to discover what other name to give the latter part of it, but collusion arising from a preconcert in the parties to do or suffer a criminal act, in order to lay a foundation for that species of proof, which from its positive and corroborative nature, would be sufficient to induce their Lordships to pass the present bill.

It was true, that Mr. Woodcock, Mr. Gooche's agent, declared at the bar, the last day, that when Berthould was in England for the purpose of proving the adulterous acts committed by Mrs. Gooche at Calais, Boulogne, and St. Omer's, Mrs. Gooche was totally ignorant that it might be deemed necessary to have a second witness, to prove the criminality at that bar, in order to entitle the parties to marry again. He was prepared to give every degree of credit to what fell from a person of Mr. Woodcock's known veracity and character; yet, he could not help observing, that the mode of conducting this business, subsequent to Berthould's return to France, after having been examined at the Commons, created suspicions in his mind, and he believed would create suspicions in the mind of every one of their Lordships, extremely unfavourable to the application made by the parties now praying relief.

Here his Lordship stated the whole of the evidence pretty much in detail, and made several pointed observations on Mr. Gooche's conduct, from the first disagreement, in 1778, to the present time, by which it appeared, he said, that he suffered his wife to go whither she liked; in consequence of which she went to France, where she remained eighteen months.—On her return to England, she lodged at Mrs. Macdonald's, at Chelsea, where she met with Berthould, and hired her as a companion or servant. Mrs. Gooche thus accompanied, goes to France a second time, and what happens in consequence? Berthould, who seems to have been hired for the purpose, is made privy to her adulterous acts, with several French officers at Calais, Boulogne, and St. Omer's; and

and there was one striking circumstance which he wished to press on their Lordship's recollection; that, during the first eighteen months Mrs. Gooche lived separate, there had not been the least charge or supposition of her infidelity. That however was not the case; on Berthould's return, Mrs. Gooche, as it should seem to him, being informed that the proof was incomplete, calls up Frances Portie to be a witness to her infamy at Rigourds; which Frances Portie, in the course of her evidence, acknowledges that Mrs. Gooche asked her, was not she surprised upon being called up to her bedside the preceding evening, at so late an hour, and on such an occasion? adding at the same time, "you will probably be called to give evidence of this in England." Finally, he would submit it to their Lordships, whether the sending Panchaud, Mr. Gooche's servant, to bring over and accompany Berthould and Frances Portie, to give evidence at their Lordships' bar, did not afford strong ground of suspicion, though perhaps it did not amount to actual proof, that the whole of the business, from the Autumn of 1779, when Mrs. Gooche left Chelsea, accompanied by Berthould, was preconcerted between her on one side, and at least by the agents and friends of her husband on the other?

He felt as much as any man possibly could for Mr. Gooche's unhappy situation. He had an high respect and esteem for his family, with some of whom he had lived upon a footing of the most friendly intimacy, particularly with his uncle, when at college; from which circumstance, he trusted, Mr. Gooche and his friends would attribute his present conduct as merely arising from a sense of duty; for he could with sincerity aver, were he to indulge his personal feelings, and give way to the natural bias which hung upon his mind, he would, instead of opposing the relief sought, be one of the most forward in granting it.

In farther confirmation of what struck him on the *prima facie* evidence of the nature and quantity of the proof itself, and notwithstanding the great reliance he had upon the assurances given by Mr. Woodcock, there were other stories afloat without doors. He had himself heard different accounts, in discourse, and had received several anonymous letters, strongly contradicting the case attempted to be made out at the bar, all which went to confirm the suspicions he had already suggested. He had indeed received one from the lady herself, in which she informed him, "if all circumstances were disclosed, it would exhibit something very different from what had been given in evidence at the bar."

Such

Such being the general ideas he entertained on the subject, he must fairly acknowledge, that he could not agree with the learned prelate's motion, for sending the bill to a committee; and when, as an act of duty, he should be called upon to put the question, he wished to make known his intention of giving that question a negative, at the same time anxious that their Lordships should be fully persuaded, that he had no wish one way or other, farther than his conduct was meant to tally with a conscientious discharge of his duty. This however he thought fit to intimate, if it was their Lordships opinion, that the bill ought to be sent to a committee, he was determined not to oppose it in any future stage.

The learned Prelate had, in his opinion, very properly distinguished between the well founded claims of innocence and the punishment that ought ever to await guilt; and while he urged the propriety of withholding relief, when it did not arise from guilt, antecedent to the knowledge of the party injured, *id est*, the husband, endeavoured to apply that principle, by confining, in the present instance, the relief to the party injured, and precluding thereby and defeating the views of the guilty person, which the learned Prelate said, for ought that appeared to him, was the principal motive that induced her to that infamous conduct, and finally, to prevent her from enjoying the advantages she promised to reap from it, that of an ample settlement.

This, he confessed, was plausible, and seemingly founded in distributive justice, but he much doubted of its practicability, agreeably to the principles of law and the established rules of administering this species of judicature, or rather legislation, in that House. Supposing it however for an instant, that no obstacle, as he was about to suggest to their Lordships, should stand in the way, he doubted much of the equity of such a procedure, under the strong circumstances to which he had so often alluded in the course of his speech. He would not venture to say of actual premeditated collusion, in all its parts and circumstances, but most clearly of subsequent mutual consent. Mr. and Mrs. Gooche came to their Lordships bar as petitioners, or suitors, whose prayers, claims, and respective rights, were clearly separate and distinct. It was evident at all events, let the transaction have originated where or how it might, there was one point which could not admit of any controversy, that Mr. Gooche had previously agreed to certain arrangements; in return for which, Mrs. Gooche undertook to furnish him with these proofs, which were necessary to effect the dissolving of the marriage contract,

tract. The criminal proofs were, the value received on one side; a provision for the wife was the valuable consideration to be received on the other; it would consequently be inequitable, as well as repugnant to the known principles and rules of law, to extort confessions under the idea of good faith, which were afterwards to be solely employed to the advantage of the other party, and to the detriment of the party confessing.

But independent of the impropriety, or rather actual injustice, of carrying into execution one part of the consentaneous transactions, should the learned Prelate's ideas prevail, he looked upon it that such a scheme was totally impracticable, were the established mode of proceeding in that House to be conformed to respecting all acts of legislation, and he begged permission to make himself perfectly understood on this part of the question.

The bill, as presented to that House was a bill upon certain facts therein stated, and offered to be proved in order to lay a ground for the dissolving the marriage of the parties, to give them leave to marry again, and to make certain a provision for the petitioner's now wife. The bill is read a first and second time, and the motion made by the learned Prelate is to send it to a committee. So far the established mode of proceeding is strictly adhered to; but an exception being taken to the conduct of one of the parties, namely Mrs. Gooche, that she committed the adulterous acts which have been proved on her, in order to give efficacy to this bill; and of course to marry again; and suspicions, not amounting to proofs, having been suggested against Mr. Gooche by his friends or agents, that he had been privy or consenting to those acts, or had previously consented to their commission, the learned Prelate, eager for justice, and in order to discriminate the guilty from the innocent, strikes out what appears to him a middle path. He recommends to send the bill to a committee, in order to cure the original defect, that of permitting the presumed guilty party of profiting of her own wrong, which he presumes will remove all farther objections to its passing. He begged leave, however, to set the learned Prelate right, respecting one thing which he seemed to have overlooked: The bill, agreeably to their Lordships mode of proceeding, could not be amending in the committee; the principles of the bill was directed to three objects; to dissolve the marriage, to give leave to marry again, and to make a provision for Mrs. Gooche. This constituted the whole of the principle of the bill, which had already received their Lordships sanction:

tion: The principle, it was true, might be modified; it might be enlarged and extended; by the introduction of new clauses, but could never be altered; consequently there was no other alternative now left but to pursue the principle of the bill faithfully; or, by withdrawing it, begin *de novo*, and frame a new bill upon the principle recommended by the learned Prelate.

He had long before he had the honour of a seat in that House, and too often since, beheld with no small degree of dissatisfaction, the manner and grounds of procuring divorces in that House, and was sorry to say, that they frequently approached to the ludicrous, if not the downright ridiculous, and in every sense might be well deemed unbecoming the dignity, the gravity, and justice of that House; and in fine, were a disgrace to the legislature itself, which should never, upon any account, be put in situations tending to excite levity and ridicule.

No person could entertain a more proper respect, and even veneration for ancient forms than he did; they were generally founded on wisdom, and well calculated to promote the ends for which they were instituted. When, however, the powers thus created, were perverted or abused; when the real efficient purposes were no longer sought or attainable; he must confess, his respect and veneration decreased in exact proportion to the extent and magnitude of the evil superinduced or permitted.

Parties, for instance, came to that House, and the other deliberative branch of the legislature, for relief, arising from some misfortune which could in no other manner be palliated or removed. The ground of their application, under circumstances similar to the present, was the commission of a criminal act in one of the parties; too often within the previous knowledge of the party deemed innocent, and not unfrequently, he feared, upon agreement and with pre-concert: In such cases, would any noble Lord who heard him, rise and gravely assert, that either party could be deemed innocent? he was persuaded, that not one of their Lordships would venture to go that length. This, in his apprehension, was derogatory, if not directly subversive of every principle of technical or substantial justice, or virtue and sound morals, and of domestic happiness.

Such a mode of proceeding was to the last degree unbecoming the dignity of the British legislature. It was an improper exercise of what he deemed an improper power, though

though it had even been more wisely exercised. The grounds of relief ought to be founded in the law, not made to originate with the legislature. The legislature were competent to form a law for the purpose; but farther than that he would never wish the legislature to interfere, or that their opinions should operate upon crimes so as to distribute rewards and punishments. The power which ought to give relief, should be a judicial power created by law, and exercised agreeably to the ordinary dispensations of justice, where every man injured would come upon equal terms; and where nothing could be given or withheld farther than what the law or laws in being had actually and specifically prescribed.

He did not wish to impeach the laws of the former times; but having turned his attention pretty fully on the subject, whether his judgement was well conceived or not, he trusted what he had taken the liberty to submit to their Lordships would not be deemed totally impertinent; if however, in the present instance, he should have the misfortune to differ with their Lordships, it would be his duty as well as inclination to abstain in future from pressing his crude, though well-intended ideas on the House.

The learned prelate seemed to be of opinion, as a divine, that the marriage bonds were dissoluble. He heard the learned prelate with great attention, and should feel a proper diffidence, when he dissented from him, on a subject of this kind; yet, if the learned prelate meant to maintain it, as a general principle, connected with the present mode of giving that principle effect, as in the case of passing modern divorce bills, he doubted much of the propriety of both the principle and of carrying it into execution; and that because the proof of individual guilt, in numerous instances, created the evil. When he said this, he wished to be understood, that the intention of separating suggested the means, the act of adultery itself, which was repugnant to the principle of all sound legislation, namely domestic peace, good morals, and family union. He would appeal to every noble Lord who heard him, whether constituting a criminal act, as the only medium of relief, was not the strongest possible incentive to the commission of it under certain circumstances? and whether it was not probable, that in many cases, the prospect of a final separation did not operate as an encouragement to these beginnings, which experience has often proved have gradually led to more serious and criminal consequences.

There might, it is true, be possible cases, in which a judicial power, as he had already observed, properly constituted, might be enabled to give relief; such as incurable disagreements, fixed aversion, and many other untoward accidents, which sometimes unhappily arise in the married state, but the law, he would contend, which might create such a tribunal, ought to have specially in view two points; the preservation of sound morality, farther strengthened and confirmed by the sanction of religion.

A very extraordinary species of commentary had gone forth*, upon what had fallen from him, on the present subject, on a former day; and an absurdity in conclusion had been endeavoured to be fixed upon him in consequence thereof. It was represented without doors, as if it had been maintained in that House, if a woman had been guilty of a criminal act, and concealed her shame in several instances, but had at length been detected, such detection would be a good ground for the husband to apply for relief; but that when she committed a similar act openly and publicly, to the disgrace of her sex, and invited persons to be witnesses to it, that the injured husband ought to be precluded all redress. This was a very unfair manner of stating, or rather misrepresenting his arguments and his words. No such expression fell from him; no such argument ever entered his mind; nor could, of course, what he said admit of so unjust and absurd a conclusion. It was not because Mrs. Gooche had acted openly and avowedly in the shameful manner she had done, and not by chance, inclination, stealth, or from passion, but because she acted openly for the purpose of laying a foundation, such as would insure her the attainment of the great object of her wishes, and, for aught that appeared satisfactorily to the contrary, that of her husband likewise.

His Lordship, after several other arguments, all tending to convey his hearty disapprobation of the bill, as well as of granting divorces by an immediate act of the legislature, added, that the event on the present occasion, be it what it might, he should have the satisfaction of having discharged his duty to their Lordships, and the public, by setting his face openly against a custom, which he was firmly persuaded had proved within the last century so destructive to morals and sound religion,

* Alluding to some observations made on his lordship's speech on the 19th, in the news papers.

religion, and had in infinitely more instances than appeared either to that House or the public, proved so destructive of the happiness of married people, their parents, children, friends, and relations.

The Bishop of *Rochester* (Dr. Thomas) acknowledged, that if he had entertained any doubts upon the subject, the learned Lord on the woolstack had completely moved them, both as to the impropriety of sending the bill to a committee, and therein introducing a new principle, and likewise of the bill itself, independent of any collateral consideration. Under this impression, he therefore rose to declare his intention of giving the right reverend prelate's motion a direct negative.

The bar was then cleared, and the House divided: Contents for committing 10; not-contents, 9.

The bill was accordingly committed for that day fortnight, the 12th of March.

February 27.

Private business.—Adjourned till Monday.

March 5.

Private business.—Adjourned to the next day.

March 6.

Private business.—No debate.

March 7.

Public business, in course.—No debate.—Adjourned till Monday.

March 12

Lord *Edgewcombe* took his oaths and seat in the house, on his new dignity of Viscount Mount-Edgewcombe, of Valetort, in the county of Devon. His Lordship was introduced by Black Rod and Garter, between the Viscounts Hampden and Wentworth.

Several public and private bills received the royal assent by commission.

The Bishop of *St. David's* then moved the order of the day, for the House to go into a committee on Gooche's Divorce-Bill. The House accordingly adjourned during pleasure, and Lord Scarisdale took his seat at the table.

The Lord Chancellor, as soon as the title of the bill was read, came to his place, and spoke against the principle as

well as provisions of the bill, recapitulating the whole of the evidence, as on the two preceding days, and making several pointed observations upon it as he proceeded.

The Bishop
of St.
David's

The Bishop of *St. David's*, as on the former day, expatiated much on the very singular hardship Mr Gooche must labour under should the present bill be thrown out, and in consequence thereof, so ill treated and injured a man be debarred all future redress, and compelled to live with an abandoned woman: and as the learned Lord's arguments seemed to rest chiefly on a presumed collusion or pre-concert between the parties, he thought, in order to clear up that point to the satisfaction of their Lordships, it would be very proper to call Mr. Woodcock, Mr. Gooche's agent, to be again examined at the bar.

Mr. Woodcock was accordingly interrogated as to several particulars, and seemed to return very satisfactory answers, so far as he was acquainted with the transaction as an agent.—Being ordered to withdraw,

Lord
Abingdon.

The Earl of *Abingdon* rose, and spoke in favour of the bill, strenuously contending, that it did not appear by any part of the evidence that Mr. Gooche acted in pre-concert, or was pre consenting to his wife's infamous conduct.

A general conversation now arose, which continued for some time, and which contained little more than the mere recapitulation of the former arguments.

Lord
Chancellor.

At length, the first enacting clause for dissolving the marriage of the parties being read, the *Lord Chancellor* spoke against it, and demanded a division. The committee being counted, there appeared for the clause, contents 13; not-contents 14.

His Lordship then moved, that the House be resumed, which was agreed to without a division; so that after three days warm debate, the bill was rejected, and rejected precisely by an equal majority to that which voted for sending it to a committee on that day fortnight.

March 13.

Private business.—No debate.

March 14.

The
Earl of
Radnor.

As soon as the private business was over, the Earl of *Radnor* rose, and moved the second reading of the bill for obliging all officers serving in the militia, to deliver in their qualifications, agreeable to the several acts of Parliament passed for the regulation of the militia in that part of Great Britain called Eng-
land

land, to the clerk of the peace in each county, where they respectively served, with a particular account of the nature of the estate, description, &c. His Lordship in support of the bill observed, that the laws already in being had proved defective, and great numbers of unqualified persons were admitted; by which means, instead of being a constitutional defence, as was first intended, by putting arms into the hands of those, who were the natural and fittest defenders of their own property, numbers of half-pay officers; and other who had no attachment either by birth or possession to the provincial regiments, had been appointed to commissions. Hence the militia, as to every purpose but that of mere defence, differed very little, if at all, from a standing army. He begged however, to be understood, that he had no objection to the mode of appointment farther than as it contradicted the original intention of the first framers of the militia laws, and of every subsequent law enacted for the same purpose. He had no objection, for instance, to the employing half-pay officers in the service of their country; but he would have them properly employed; he would have them either attached to the corps to which they formerly belonged, or incorporated into the new levies. He felt equally as to those gentlemen who had never before served, but who were not entitled to serve in the militia, under the present existing laws. If they wished to serve their country, and had friends, they could not fail of obtaining commissions. If they had not sufficient interest to obtain commissions, nor had money to purchase, he would appeal to every noble lord who heard him, if there could be the least hardship in compelling them to quit a service from which they could derive no possible advantage; but, on the contrary, would suffer a material injury, in spending so many years of the most valuable part of their lives to no manner of business, thereby unfitting themselves, as soon as the militia should come to be disbanded, for any profitable or advantageous pursuit. They would be gentlemen, or idlers, without the means of supporting the character; and, in short, from being probably useful members of society, they would become a burden to their friends. He did not mean to confine the intended reform to the subaltern officers only; he believed that the abuse had in many instances reached higher; and that several captains of companies had not a qualification, which if inquired into would make them eligible even to be appointed subalterns. On the whole, he trusted noble Lords would agree with him, that the original intention of the militia laws ought to be strictly pursued, or, that all restrictions should be removed, and the militia in
that

that instance, as well as in every other, put upon the same footing with the military.

Earl Gower

Earl Gower rose, and in a short speech, confirmed the reasoning of the noble lord who spoke last, he acknowledged that what had been urged by the noble Earl, carried with it great weight. The principle and spirit of the militia laws were such exactly as his Lordship had described, but he doubted much of the expediency of the noble lord's bill, at any time pending the war, but at this season, he was perfectly satisfied, that any material change would prove very injurious to the service.

It would in the first instance prove extremely troublesome to those gentlemen who were really qualified, to deliver in proofs and specifications in the manner proposed by the bill. Great numbers of the officers were quartered in the most distant parts of the kingdom, from the places of their residence, and where of course their property was situated. Many obstacles might arise to impede, or render at the best disagreeable, such a specification of property to those nearer home, or even on the spot. But his prime objection was, upon another more general ground, the advanced period of the session compared with the time, possibly the militia might be called upon to go into camp or into garrison. If the law was to be strictly enforced, there was no doubt but numberless resignations would follow; yet that was not all, those commissions must be filled up and other persons appointed in their room. Here then were several difficulties to be surmounted. One was, that dismissing persons already trained to the service, and substituting others in their room who had every thing to learn; this it was true, might be construed into a disapprobation of the principle of the bill, but he did not mean to go farther than saying, that the present season, not very far distant from the eve of a campaign, was a very improper time for so general and extensive an alteration. He was not then prepared to finally decide whether or not such an alteration ought ever take place in a time of war, but he was fully prepared to say, that it ought not to take place in the middle of the month of March, when we could not tell how soon we might be attacked by our numerous and very formidable foes.

The other point, when connected with the foregoing, was a matter, in his apprehension, of very serious consideration. He trusted, that it was already sufficiently understood, that though the places of those officers who could not prove their qualifications

qualifications, or would not perhaps give themselves the trouble, would not be so well filled as at present, and that for the reason already assigned, that such as had seen service were preferable to such as had not. But supposing this to make no material difference, nor to be productive of any inconvenience; he wished to press the difficulty on their Lordships' minds, which would result from filling up those vacancies, and the description of men who would be called upon to fill them up; men of small property and of industrious habits, many of them with large families, who drew their chief support from the industry of the persons who would be thus called upon. He should say nothing of the increased expence of living, and of a subaltern officer being obliged to maintain himself in one part of the kingdom, and his wife and a numerous family of children, perhaps at two or three hundred miles distance, in another part of the kingdom; and it might be attended with a farther evil, and he believed often would, if the person thus described should be in any business, the carrying on of which would require his own personal care and attention; for instance, if engaged in any manufacturing or mercantile business, or a gentleman farmer, &c. the distress and injury in such a case was easier imagined than described, it was therefore well worthy of their Lordships' attention, whether it would not be better to prefer as an ideal evil to actual injury and inconvenience.

He begged however, before he sat down, to be understood as by no means wishing to put a perpetual negative upon such a bill, means might be devised to remove every one of the inconveniences which he had taken the liberty to point out; whenever such means were proposed, he should cheerfully enter into a consideration of them. Some things had struck him on the subject, which he flattered himself, when properly digested, might accelerate the object the noble Earl had in contemplation. But as matters then stood, and under the manifest difficulties and striking inconveniences which had suggested themselves to him, it was impossible for him at so critical a moment as the present, to give his assent to any measure which would work so great an alteration in the militia force of this kingdom.

The Duke of *Manchester* said, he perfectly agreed with the noble Earl who brought in the bill, that the appointing unqualified persons to commissions in the militia, was no less against the letter than directly repugnant to the spirit of the militia laws or system, of having an internal force for the defence

fence of the kingdom, which force was to be placed under the command, direction, and controul of the actual owners of the soil. He lamented the defect in the laws already in being, which declared, or rather described, the proper persons who were in their respective ranks to share that command; but so it was, that the law wanted sufficient sanctions to give it effectual operation.

He thought it his duty to say so much, and the more so, as he had at a very early period of his life paid particular attention to the militia; his situation, as Lord Lieutenant of a county, rendered it an act of duty, he might add, it became with him an act of pleasure as well as duty; but he must add, he was fully satisfied, that every thing advanced by the noble Earl in the blue ribbon, who spoke last, convinced him more and more, of not only the impropriety or inexpediency of insisting upon qualifications, but the actual impracticability of supplying the places of those officers who would, if the noble Earl's bill were to pass, be dismissed from the service. He did not mean to say, that such a thing was absolutely impossible, because there was a law in being for the purpose, and it might be well supposed that the legislature would not, nor had not enacted an impossibility; but he would say, that it was impossible in his conception, to enforce the law rigidly, in the manner and to the extent proposed by the noble Earl, without creating so many difficulties and obstructions as must prove highly detrimental to the militia service in general.

He would at any time hereafter, most readily co-operate all in his power with the noble lord towards effecting so desirable an end as his Lordship professed to have in view; but for the reasons urged by the noble Earl in the blue ribbon, and the many obstacles which he foresaw would be thrown in the way, even of carrying the present intended law into execution, as well as those already in being, not choosing to give the bill a direct negative, he wished that it might be either withdrawn, postponed to some distant day, or disposed of by the previous question.

Earl of Coventry.

The Earl of *Coventry* expressed himself nearly to the same purport of the two noble lords who spoke before him, and expressed a wish that the second reading of the bill be deferred till that day three months.

Lord Chancellor.

The *Lord Chancellor* put the question, that the said bill be read a second time on that day three months; which was agreed to without a division.

The

The Earl of *Radnor* rose a second time, and moved an address to his Majesty, desiring that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to give directions, that there be laid before that House a return of all the qualifications sent in to the respective clerks of the peace, &c. by officers serving in his Majesty's militia forces.

The Lord *Chancellor* came from the woolstack to his place, and opposed the motion; said it would give a great deal of unnecessary trouble, and would besides create an alarm throughout the whole militia of this kingdom. By the disposal of the bill on which he had just put the question, it appeared to be the sense of the House, that no farther proceeding was to be had concerning it during the remainder of the present session, consequently the noble lord's motion could answer no purpose. If at any future period, noble lords should turn the affair in their minds, and coming properly prepared to enter into a full discussion of the subject, and ready to devise means, which while directed to the particular object, would at the same time provide for the inconveniences pointed out by every individual lord who spoke, but the noble Earl who made the motion, it would be time enough to move for the list; but to give trouble without any direct intimation that such means had been discovered, or were meant to be resorted to, in his apprehension, would be no less nugatory than improper. Such being his ideas, he found himself indispensably bound, as an act of duty, to oppose the noble lord's motion.

The question was then put, and the motion negatived without a division.

Adjourned to Monday.

March 19.

Prayers being over, Lord Middletown was introduced in the usual form, and took the oaths and his seat in that House, on his recent accession to that title.

The Earl of Rosebury and Lord Say and Sele likewise took the oaths and their seats.

As soon as the private business was finished Earl *Ferrers* rose, and made several observations on the present alarming increase of Roman Catholics in this kingdom, which he endeavoured to prove, from the comparison of three different computations made at three different periods. In 1717, he said the number of Roman Catholics in the county of Chester, upon a fair calculation, was 10,000: in 1767, upon a similar estimate, they

had arisen to 25,000; and according to the late computation made at the interposition of Parliament, they amounted to upwards of 27,000. His Lordship thought it fair to argue from this particular district to the generality of the kingdom, and therefore concluded that the number of Roman Catholics upon the whole must have been increased more than double within the period mentioned. He considered this as so dangerous to the religious establishment and domestic security of this country, that, with their Lordships permission, he would bring in a bill for stopping the increase of this growing evil, and particularly imposing some severe penalties upon any attempts on the part of Papists to make converts to their faith; and likewise to make a strict prohibition against their teaching in schools of any denomination. If the sense of the House should be with him, he meant to move that their Lordships be summoned for Wednesday sevensnight, for the purpose of resolving itself into a committee, to consider of certain propositions calculated to restrain the farther growth of Popery within this kingdom.

He trusted, that their Lordships would give him the credit he deserved, when he assured them, that his motives were not founded in a false zeal or intolerant spirit; an inclination to oppress or persecute. So far from it, that he was clearly of opinion, that many of the laws now in being were both cruel and impolitic, so much so, that such had been the moderate and lenient disposition and conduct of government that the whole code was become a dead letter. It was in order to strike out a middle path that he presumed to give their Lordships the intended trouble, for the purpose of revising those laws, or rather repealing all the penal statutes now in being against Popery, and passing a general law in their stead, which should have two special objects in view; the protection of the people, professing the Romish religion, in the free exercise of it, and of their civil liberties, and property; the other, by providing such wholesome restrictions as might promise to prevent the farther increasing the growth of Popery. He would wish to have such a law as would be effective, as would not clash with the established rules of humanity and justice; and yet such as would defeat every attempt to propagate a religion, which from its principles, tenets, &c. held out strong temptations to the weak, the credulous, and the ignorant. He would wish to see less rigour and more efficacy introduced into the laws for preventing the growth of Popery; for although he was not very easily

easily led to be alarmed by bugbears, he could easily foresee by the documents on the table, and to which he had referred, when he first rose, that an evil, trifling and comparatively small in its first appearance might increase, and gain strength sufficient to produce consequences of a very serious nature in its progress.

Should none of their Lordships oppose his intentions, he meant as soon as he could learn the sense of the House on the subject, to move that their Lordships be summoned, on Wednesday the 29th instant, to take into consideration the propriety of repealing all the penal statutes against Roman Catholics, for the purposes already mentioned.

The Bishop of *Chester* (Dr. Porteus) said he had no intention to oppose the noble lord's design of introducing a bill for checking the growth of Roman Catholics; but as the county of *Chester* had been particularly alluded to, he thought himself under some necessity to explain to their Lordships the true source of the increase mentioned. He had made calculations as well as the noble lord, and acknowledged that, as to the general result, his accounts very nearly corresponded with those which had just been stated; but though he had every reason to depend upon that calculation which was made in the year 1767, and also on that subsequently formed in 1780, yet he had various motives for disputing the accuracy or authenticity of the first estimation made in 1717, which he believed to be very vague and uncertain. If there was no other argument than this, against the conclusion which had been drawn, that the number was increased more than double, yet that would be of considerable validity, as it would shew the House, that though this conclusion was not necessarily false, yet it was probably not true, and being upon the whole by no means to be confided in, nothing could be fairly inferred from it. The circumstance, however, to which he principally referred was this, and a very simple though cogent one it was, the immense increase of population which had lately taken place within the diocese of *Chester*. This increase, since the year 1717, was such as exceeded all belief, and of itself constituted a sufficient explanation of the alarming proposition stated by the noble lord. If the number of the inhabitants in general had been so considerably increased, it was plain the Roman Catholics must have increased in a proportionate degree, consequently, any arguments built upon a partial increase of the Roman Catholics within the diocese of *Chester*, unless accompanied with stating in general the progress of

The Bp. of
Chester.

population, must be founded in error. As to bringing in a bill for preventing the conversion of persons to the Roman Popish persuasion, that, in his opinion, was unnecessary, as the severest penalties were already denounced by the law of the land against any man who should make such an attempt, it being even a capital offence in a father to conspire with a Popish priest in producing such a conversion. With respect to the schools, he was of opinion the penalties and impediments to them were sufficiently severe. No Roman Catholic was permitted to teach a Protestant child; as for their teaching the children that belonged to their own faith, he should never concur in depriving them of that, as he considered it to be totally inconsistent with justice, humanity, and perhaps policy, to impose such a restriction. Upon the whole, however, he had no objection to the bill being brought in at the time proposed by the noble lord, but he would just take the liberty to suggest, that at this period, when the religious ferment which had been recently excited in the kingdom was hardly quieted, it might not perhaps be quite politic to revive the subject.

He wished, the noble lord however, before he ventured to commit himself upon the subject, to perfectly inform himself, least it should be found, that the very argument which he stated might make against his conclusion; for if after numbering the Protestant inhabitants, as well as the Roman Catholics, it should be found, that the increase of the latter was not proportionably rapid with the former, it would amount to a demonstration, that the present penal statutes, though become a dead letter from the lenient temper of government, had effected the only purpose for which such laws could be passed, the preventing the growth of Popery. He wished likewise, before he sat down, to remind the noble Earl, that although he was far from wishing or desiring to see those laws rigorously executed, because repugnant to the first principles of humanity, and the tolerant spirit of the Protestant church established in this kingdom, he was not prepared to say that he would assent to a total and indiscriminate repeal of them; for if penal statutes could be defended upon any ground, it must be that of preventing greater evils, and so far he believed, if from no other motives, the evils they were intended to prevent had been in a great measure entirely removed.

Earl Ferrers Earl Ferrers said, he was as averse to making experiments, or wishing to persecute as the Right Rev. Prelate; he thought
he

he had fully explained himself upon that subject when he first rose, and as to making experiments, he was not so self-sufficient as to take such a task upon himself, unaided or unassisted by others; he rose only to throw out a proposition to the House for its opinion, particularly that of the Right Rev. Benth, whose advice and assistance, upon a subject of so much importance, he made no doubt he should be able to obtain. By what had now fallen from the learned prelate, he was given to understand what the temper of that Bench was; and on that ground only, more than from any persuasion or conviction brought home to his mind by what had fallen from the learned Prelate, he was willing to acquiesce in his Lordship's sentiments; besides this, there were other reasons which operated upon and induced him to determine to change his intention of troubling their Lordships on the day mentioned. It was a subject well worthy of their Lordships' attention, and though he should not take any step in it during the course of the present session, he heard no objection started against such a law as he had ventured to suggest, sufficient to prevent him from taking the affair up at some more fit and convenient opportunity.

The House adjourned to the next day.

March 20.

This day the loan and lottery bill was read a second time, and ordered for a third reading the next day.—Adjourned.

March 21.

As soon as prayers were over, the order of the day for the third reading of the loan bill was moved; which, as soon as the title was announced, called up

The Marquis of *Rockingham*; his Lordship said, he was totally uninformed, whether the bill was or was not before their Lordships till the evening before last, which was the day it was brought up from the other House, presented and read a first time. Yesterday he attended in his place, in order to deliver his sentiments on it, upon the second reading, but the House was so badly attended, that he did not think it proper to speak to empty benches, and therefore postponed what he had to say to this day upon the bill's going to a committee; but here again he found himself disappointed, for he understood since he came into the House, that the bill had not been committed, but that every necessary form had been dispensed with, and the bill ordered to be read a third time

The Mar-
quis of
Rocking-
ham.

time this day, contrary to all precedent, usage, and rule of parliamentary proceeding respecting public bills, which should be publicly committed in the body of the House.

But he did not mean to rest his opposition at all upon the matter of form, his objections would be directed against the substance of the bill, the manner in which it was framed, the corrupt source from which it originated, and the various mischiefs and evils with which it was pregnant, whether considered in a retrospective or prospective view, or as fraught with present mischief. The loan to which their Lordships were going to give a sanction, by passing the present bill, was one of the most corrupt in its formation, the most shameful in its progress, and as far as the consequences could be supposed to extend, the most injurious to the public that could possibly be conceived.

After this introduction, which he pronounced with much warmth, and with uncommon energy of voice; his Lordship observed, that the loan presented two faces, the ostensible or open one, and the concealed; the former being framed so as to impose upon the public within and without doors, and the latter to pillage them of their property; the one was the pretended bargain made by the Minister with the subscribers, in behalf or under the implied faith of Parliament; the other, a private contract, made with certain favourite subscribers for the most unjust, because the most shamefully corrupt, purposes. To prove what he now asserted, he would state the terms of both loans, or rather the real and pretended terms of the same loan, taking in two different points of view, in order that their Lordships might be enabled to judge how far he was, or was not justified in the very harsh terms he had been obliged to bestow on it, when expressing his disapprobation, he might indeed add his detestation, of the whole transaction.

The Minister's terms, as laid before Parliament, were as follow:

	£.	£.	s.	d.
150l. 3 per cent. valued at	58	per cent.	87	0 0
25l. 4 per cent. —	78	—	17	10 0
Lottery Tickets, four to each				
1000l. or 12l. upon every				
1000l. stock subscription, com-	13	—	1	4 0
puted at				

£ 105 14 0

Here

Here then was the bonus or profit stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the face of the nation, of five pounds fourteen shillings; on the other hand, he begged their Lordships to attend to the real, not to this fallacious statement, in which he would prove beyond question, that allowing the value of the stocks to have been fairly valued, the bonus was upwards of eight and a quarter, if not full eight and a half per cent. instead of five and three quarters, as had been stated by the noble Lord, the Minister, in the other House. For to the foregoing were to be added the interest from the first of February to the day of the payment, a period of seven weeks, at three and four per cent. which on each hundred pounds subscribed, amounted to one hundred and seventy-five pounds stock, or about five pounds seven shillings per annum, which within the period alluded to, would on that account alone put into the pocket of the subscriber nearly eight shillings. There was a discount upon each prompt allowed, and finally all those subscribers who should make the last payment on or before the middle of September, were to be paid interest throughout, from the first of January. Taking therefore the bonus as stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and adding the other advantages he had now mentioned, suppressing all fractions of a shilling, the real bonus would stand as hereunder :

	£	s
150 <i>l</i> . 3 per cent. ————	87	0
25 <i>l</i> . 4 per cent. ————	17	10
Lottery Tickets, ————	1	4
Interest accruing from the 1 st of January till the day of the first payment ————	7	0
Ditto from the 1 st payment till September, making all reasonable allowances and deductions	2	6
Total	108	7

If any noble Lord, who heard him, could set him right, or point out any error he had committed in the foregoing statement, he should be much obliged to him to rise; for unless he should find that he had been misinformed in his computations, he would take it for granted, that the whole had been faithfully and correctly stated.

Before he should proceed any farther, he thought it necessary to take notice of some particulars, which aggravated the conduct of the minister, because calculated to serve the sub-

subscribers at the expence of the nation. By Castaign's Paper, the Friday before the 9th, the budget was opened, the 3 per cent. bore 58 and 59, and the 4 per cent. were done at 70. In the mean time a rumour of a peace was spread, which between that and Monday, the day the bargain was supposed to have been struck, rose the 3 per cent. to 60, 61, and even 62, and the 4 per cent to 72. Yet, though the noble lord himself acknowledged that there was some foundation for such a rumour, and even in his place ventured to say, that there was a prospect, or at least an appearance of a tendency to peace, instead of availing himself of that favourable opportunity, of making an advantageous bargain for the public, he rated the 4 per cent. at 70, and the 3 per cent. at 58, just as if no alteration in the state of affairs had happened, or that the stocks had not been at all operated upon by the rumour or prospect alluded to. There was another circumstance which deprived the noble lord of all apology, because in stating the progress of the bargain with the subscribers, he confessed, he had not intirely concluded it till Monday after, as his Lordship expressed himself, there had appeared to him a disposition in the belligerent powers tending to peace.

Such being the circumstances attending the loan, he thought himself fully justified, in asserting, that on the day the loan was submitted to Parliament, the bonus stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of five pounds fourteen shillings the two pounds thirteen shillings arising from the prompts, discounts, and previous commencement of the interest from the first of January to the day of the first payment, with the depreciated value of the stock, added together, brought the bonus or profit up to the monstrous sum of nearly ten per cent. or one million two hundred thousands pounds premium; at least whether it might prove so lucrative to the subscribers, the nation would be obliged to pay that sum, for the loan of twelve millions, and besides an usurious interest of five and an half per cent. in perpetuity. He was aware of the answers which might be made in defence of the loan; one was, the market fixed the price, and that the necessity of the state made the bargain, and not the minister; that to be sure the bargain was a bad one, in one light, but a good one, when considered as the best that could be made in the present exigency of affairs. He was ready to admit both as general propositions, which could not be fairly called in question, or controverted; but that was the very point in issue between those

those who negotiated the loan and defended it, and those who considered it, at the best, an improvident bargain, and most probably a corrupt one. He denied, that there was a necessity of dealing with one set of men in preference to another, in order to enrich them at the expence of the public, or by plundering the public still more, to value the stocks one and an half, if not two per cent. under their intrinsic value. This formed the state of things, which he could never approve of, and a species of state necessity of which he would ever dispute the existence. He did not doubt, however, but the measure originated in necessity; he meant ministerial necessity; for notwithstanding the numerous places, pensions, contracts, and every other species of influence, in the gift or disposal of the minister; notwithstanding the last effect of a weak and unpopular administration, he meant the lavish hand with which honours were conferred, upon all sexes and description of persons, such was the folly, the madness, he might add the wickedness of the measures of government, that the minister found himself compelled to resort to this shameful waste of public money, to bring to his standard the corruptible part of his opponents, and to fix and persuade the wavering and doubtful among his friends.

What he had yet offered on the subject of the loan would be totally incomplete, if he did not point out some of the leading circumstances respecting its negociation and distribution; which he trusted, would serve to convince the greatest political sceptic that it was not only improvident, but highly corrupt.

He should for this purpose recur to the only ground on which it was attempted to be defended in the other House, upon the supposition already mentioned, that although a very disadvantageous bargain, it was the best that could be made. He would unsay every syllable he had urged to the contrary, if that was the case, and would now proceed to offer his reasons to shew it was not.

The amount of the offers made by those who wished to subscribe, he understood amounted to between 30 and 40 millions, who, in the language of the treasury, were deemed good men, or persons supposed to be able to perform their engagements, in case that any untoward accident should happen, which might depreciate the stock. This surely was a good ground for the minister to go to market on. He wanted to borrow a sum of money upon interest, and was willing besides to give a premium to the lender. If, as in the case of an individual,

who wants to borrow a thousand pounds, and must have it, that is, cannot at all do without it, and there is but one lender, there necessity is evident ; for he submits because he cannot help it, and lies at the mercy of the money lender ; but on the other hand, if when it is known, that his security is good, and that he has two or more persons ready to advance the sum wanted, his agent, if he be able or honest, will endeavour to make the best bargain in his power ; he will treat with the money lenders severally, and close with the man who will advance the money at the lowest terms.

Was that the conduct of the minister in the other House ? did he propose terms to different persons ? No such thing : He selected from among the subscribers a few men of great weight, and those he meant to serve, and give a preference to ; and after going through all the idle forms of a mock negotiation, agreed to the terms they prescribed to him, or he wished to prescribe to himself.

But this is all assertion, it may be said. What proof is there that every means were not tried to make a good bargain for the public ? Proof, he would affirm, little short of mathematical demonstration. For no specific bargain was made with any man. The minister came to Parliament, not on an actual contract with any particular man or description of men ; he came only upon the faith of several offers amounting to upwards of 30 millions to be subscribed. What next ? Why, when the persons who offered to subscribe, came to have the real sums entered before their names, it was discovered that four-fifths of the subscription was divided among the minister's friends, and a few great monied men ; among, in particular, several of the members of the other House, clerks, mean and obscure persons, &c. while, on the other hand, some of the best names in the city were either excluded from the advantages accruing from so profitable a subscription, or did not get more than a third, a fourth, or fifth, of what they wrote for. He could not finish what he had to offer on this part of his subject, without stating the following case ; either the minister foresaw the bargain would prove a very advantageous bargain to the subscribers, or that it was a precarious one, liable to great risque. If the former, he should have reduced the profit ; if the latter, it was rather somewhat singular, that he should put those, whom he wished to serve, in a situation which might possibly render an intended act of friendship a misfortune.

It

It was a matter of opinion no way material to his argument, whether members of the other House in trade ought to have had any part of the subscription; but if not in trade, or dealers in money, he believed it would be very difficult to persuade any man in his senses, that ten per cent. profit upon a loan would not answer every purpose of influencing their conduct as much as if it had been actually issued from the Treasury, consequently, the great numbers whose names appeared in the list, laid before the other House, and the much greater number whose names were concealed or covered, convinced him that the loan was negociated, and finally made with a view to bribe those who would not perhaps look for or receive a bribe in a direct manner.

He knew it was not parliamentary to speak of what passed in the other House; he would therefore say, that he heard the loan defended in a certain assembly on two grounds, besides those he had already recounted. One was, that if any benefit was likely to arise from a subscription of the kind, it was natural and proper that the minister should give a preference to his friends; and that loans had been generally understood, in former times, to be an engine of influence, and an appendage of administration, in order to enable them to conduct the affairs of government. To each of these he would give a specific answer, by demonstrating, that the fact having not happened, in reference to the period alluded to, it did not warrant the conclusion; and if it had happened, that its specific application in the present instance could not be maintained.

He had been of an age sufficient to turn his attention to public affairs during the last glorious war, and the glorious consequences which attended it; and could therefore vouch for the truth of what he was going to assert, during the administration of Lord Chatham, when the Duke of Newcastle presided at the head of the treasury. He had since refreshed his mind, by turning over such papers as enabled him to state correctly the facts he was about to mention.

The bonus or profits on the omnium of the loan of 1758, was but one and a quarter per cent. on two millions; in 1759, he believed at half per cent. discount upon four millions. In 1760 one and a half upon eight millions; and the last three-quarters per cent, though twelve millions were raised. The next year the Duke of Newcastle went out of office, and it was not till 1763, the first year of Lord Bute's administration, that the minister, for the time being, ever

thought of extending his influence, by plundering the nation in the midst of those distresses which are always the concomitants of the state of war, during an administration in which a secret overruling influence was introduced, the fatal consequences of which, he feared, would only cease or terminate with the overthrow of our constitution, if not the total destruction of the nation itself.

So far, he trusted the fact was disproved, which was a full answer to the inference drawn from it; but he begged leave to add, that the glorious and fortunate, spirited and wise administration which he had been speaking of, he meant when Lord Chatham was at the head of our councils, a Newcastle at the head of our finances, and an Anson at the head of our navy, wanted no aid or support from corrupt or secret influence,—influence from bribery on one hand, or secret intrigues on the other. The influence of that day arose from another source, from a well founded confidence in the wisdom of their measures, in a well earned popularity; in their spirited and vigorous plans, most happily and successfully executed; in an able and faithful disbursement of the public money committed to their care and management, and on the whole, rested on the only true basis on which national prosperity or success can ever safely be supported, a firm and fixed attachment to the constitution, and every blessing and security we enjoy under it.

Having touched upon a great variety of other topics of less consequence, he contended, that the minister in the other House had broke his faith with Parliament and the nation; and though he should not put a negative on the bill, he deemed himself called upon, as an act of duty, to testify his total disapprobation of a loan, which at a time of such public calamity as the present, when the utmost œconomy became necessary, wantonly and corruptly lavished at least a million sterling; and that, in his apprehension, merely for the purpose of influencing or bribing the representatives of the nation, in Parliament, to give their countenance and support to the continuance of a most wicked, impolitic, and ruinous war.

No reply was made. The ministers present looked at each other, but nothing more passed.

L O R D S P R O T E S T, *March 21.*

The order of the day being read for the third reading of the bill, entitled “An act for raising a certain sum of money by way of annuities, and a lottery; and for consolidating certain

certain annuities which were made one joint stock, by an act made in the second year of the reign of his present Majesty, with certain annuities consolidated by several acts made in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth years of the reign of King George II. and in the fifth year of the reign of his present Majesty,"

Moved, "that the said bill be now read a third time." Which being objected to, after debate the question was put thereupon; and it was resolved in the affirmative.

The said bill was then accordingly read a third time. The question was put that the said bill do now pass; it was resolved in the affirmative.

Dissentient,

"Because when a bargain, improvident in its terms, corrupt in its operation, and partial in its distribution, is negotiated by a minister acting for the public, its having passed through the House of Commons can be no reason for its passing without observation through the House of Lords. Without waving our undoubted right of giving a negative to this or any other bill, we respect the principle of public credit too much to attempt at this juncture to exercise that right, though if we looked only at the enormity of the abuse, the most direct opposition never could be more properly called for.

"Twenty-one millions are added to the capital of the debt for a loan of twelve; five and a half per cent. perpetual annuity is granted; six hundred and fifty thousand pounds are to be levied in the yearly taxes upon the people. In such a situation the most rigid œconomy ought to have been used, and the premium on the loan ought to have been reduced in proportion to the exorbitance of the interest to be paid. Several circumstances appeared favourable to the minister, if his object had been to serve his own support. Besides the prospect derived from the beginning of a negotiation for peace, it is allowed that treble the sum subscribed had been offered, and a very large part of that surplus by persons more responsible than very many of those who were admitted. In that situation, so favourable to the borrower, where the being permitted to lend was sought with emulation, the first commissioners of the Treasury chose to make a bargain, opened at ten per cent. premium the day after the loan.

"This

" This price was not the effect of mere popular opinion, or of artful management, but was grounded on the real value of the great body of the other stocks at the time, and was no more than what arose from a just relation to the rest. We are the most dissatisfied with this shameful prodigality of public money, by comparing it with the period when a strict and conscientious management of the public treasure at home became a foundation for the glory of our arms abroad. During the Duke of Newcastle's administration, on the several successive loans from the year 1758 inclusive, to the time of his removal from office, never exceeded one and an half per cent. at the opening; was generally less, and sometimes at discount. Yet the national credit was in vigour. During that time forty-three millions were borrowed. In those happy days, the ministers standing on national ground, were not in a state of servitude to any set of men, nor led, through a false system of politics, to aggravate the distresses of their country, by hiring a venal cry to personate the voice of the public, and to give support to the measures which had occasioned such distresses.

" It is not a matter of surprise to us, at a time when such things can be done with impunity, that lords of the greatest honour and ability have wholly discontinued their attendance. But it is not improper that those lords who do sometimes attend, should record their names in testimony of their strong condemnation of the terms of this loan, and of the motives which they conceive, dictated terms so very disadvantageous to the Crown and the nation.

ROCKINGHAM.
PORTLAND,
OSBORNE,
J. St. ASAPH,
DE FERRARS,
FITZWILLIAM,
BOLTON,
POMEROY."

March 22.

This day his Majesty came to the House, and gave the royal assent to the loan, lottery, militia, and several other public and private bills; after which the House adjourned to Monday.

March 26.

Duke of Prayers being over, and the private business finished, the
Richmond. Duke of Richmond rose, and said, he understood that there
was

was a bill before the House for empowering the Colonels of the several militia regiments to enter into agreements with the substitutes, previous to the time of the expiration of the three years. This he said, might prove of very great injury to the militia service in general, indeed it struck him so forcibly, that as soon as he heard it he had posted up to town, understanding it was to be read a third time that day. He meant to move a clause on the third reading, and hoped that the House would so far indulge him as to postpone the order for the third reading till to-morrow; which was agreed to.

The order was accordingly discharged, and the House adjourned to the next day.

March 27.

Private business being over, the Bishop of *Chester* addressed the House in a speech of considerable length. His motive for rising now to trouble their Lordships was, in consequence of what had fallen from a noble Earl [Ferrers] on a former day, relative to the rapid increase of Roman Catholics within this kingdom in a few years. The noble Earl's speech on that occasion, had gone forth into the world, and might create an alarm, which he was enabled to affirm, and that with confidence, would prove every way unfounded. Since he had the honour of addressing their Lordships the last time on the subject, he made it his business to inquire more minutely into the facts, and was well pleased to find all his former arguments much strengthened, and in a manner confirmed, upon a full and comprehensive investigation of the particular and total numbers.

He then read several computations of the rapid increase of buildings and inhabitants within certain parts and districts of his diocese within certain periods, beginning early in this century, and so up to the latest accounts or returns he was able to procure, or which had appeared in printed books. In some places the proportion was a fourth, in others a third, an half; and in others again the numbers had increased four, five, six fold, or more, but he mentioned two in particular, which proved beyond question the rapid progress population has made in parts of the county of Lancaster. One was of Liverpool, which in the year 1700 contained but five thousand inhabitants, and in 1770 contained thirty five thousand and a considerable fraction; the other, a quarter of the town of Manchester, called Saltport, which contained only a few hundreds.

hundreds in the year 1719, and by the last return was found to contain eleven thousand souls.

After mentioning a great many particulars of a similar nature, he informed their Lordships, that he had exerted himself, as far as lay in his power to collect the most accurate accounts, some from printed books, others from the clergy within his own diocese; and had been tolerably successful in his inquiries relative to that part of it, called the Archdeaconry, where he found the inhabitants had within half a century increased forty thousand; and from such other parts of his diocese whence he had received returns, which did not include the whole, the remainder amounted to fifteen thousand: as far therefore as his inquiries had reached, he was able to speak with precision, that within the period he had described, the inhabitants were increased fifty-five thousand, and when the remainder of the returns came in, he doubted not but they would be found to be much more.

It had been said by the noble Earl, that the Roman Catholics increased within the diocese of Chester two thousand, between the years 1767 and 1780. If however, it was recollected, that it arose from a general increased population during that period within that diocese, it would maintain the very contrary conclusion the noble lord wished to draw from it, for it would prove, that though they had increased, they had not increased in proportion to that of the Protestant inhabitants; besides, notwithstanding the Roman Catholics had increased in the diocese of Chester, he had it from such authority as he could safely depend on, that within the period mentioned by the noble lord, the increase of Roman Catholics throughout England was no more than fifteen hundred; in that point of view likewise, there was an actual decrease of the people of that persuasion throughout England, the diocese of Chester excepted, and there it had been fully proved that they bore no manner of proportion to the general increased population.

Earl Ferrers.

Earl Ferrers said, he had taken his information from the papers laid on the table, and consequently if he had misstated any thing the error was not imputable to him, but to the species of information laid before the House. He said, he was extremely glad to hear many things which had fallen from the learned prelate; and he was perfectly satisfied of the truth of what the learned prelate had advanced, being now fully convinced, that the apprehensions for the increasing growth of Popery, which he had expressed on a former day,

were

were in a great measure groundless, or so far unbounded as to render such a measure as that he wished to submit to the wisdom of the legislature unnecessary for the present.

The order of the day was then moved, for reading a second time the bill to enable justices of the peace to act in cases of riots and tumults, without taking out their *dedimus potestatem*; an original writ issuable out of the Crown side of the Court of Chancery, the title of which imports a delegation of power from his Majesty to the person to whom it is directed.

The *Lord Chancellor* left the woolstack, and observed, that it was always customary when any bill was brought into that House, for abrogating an old law, or enacting a new one, for the person who moved the order of the day, if the bill had not been previously debated in some former stage, to assign his reasons for wishing to change the law in the particular instance. In the case now offered to their Lordships consideration, the noble Duke, [Manchester] who moved the order of the day, had neglected to comply with that form; which in deference to the legislature, was deemed essentially necessary. The bill now under consideration coming perfectly within that description, he begged the indulgence of the House, while he should enter into a short explanation of the laws already in being, upon which the present proposed bill would operate, as a partial repeal, whether they were considered as springing from the common law, which was coeval with the constitution, or whether they had been sanctioned by the legislature, or declaratory of the common law, as mandatory, prohibitory, or remedial, in instances where the common law was found to be defective. The acts by which justices of the peace were impowered, his Lordship said, were of a long standing; and in the course of several centuries which had elapsed since their institution, the original theory was improved in such a manner as to extend beyond any possibility of excellence, that our ancestors, who first formed them, could have conceived; the acts were of such consequence, and of such high authority, that they ought not to be curtailed or extended, except the most solid and well founded reasons were adduced for so doing. The bill now before the House he had carefully considered; he had read it with attention, and turned every probable consequence of it in his mind, but it did not in any one part, convince him of its present necessity, or of its future utility. It appeared to him as a bill, which would injure rather than

promote the furthering of justice, or of those laws which the wisest, the ablest, and the most respectable men had for ages made it a study to enact for the public benefit. Here his Lordship gave a most excellent detail of all the essential clauses in every bill that passed respecting the power of justices of the peace, and in what manner those clauses directed them to act. His Lordship then observed that the intended effect of the present bill was to set aside the conditional forms prescribed by law, for empowering persons appointed justices of the peace to act and discharge the respective duties of their office. Returns were made by the Lord Lieutenants of the several counties, of persons qualified to be appointed justices. Commissioners of the peace were made out in consequence thereof, but only those could act who applied for the writ, called a *dedimus potestatem*, and who went through the regular, and he would add, essential requisites provided by the statutes enacted for that purpose; such as taking the oaths in court in the presence of the King's justices or judges, on their respective circuits in the several counties. This his Lordship observed, would be a very improper indulgence to be given to any set of men, however high or respectable; and his Lordship farther said, that the matter was not only of a delicate nature, in respect to its legal consequences, but it was very tender as to its constitutional result. In short, it was not a matter to be hurried through the House. His Lordship addressed himself particularly to some noble Lords, and said, he did not doubt but the bill would meet the concurrence of many who wished to be gentlemen justices; that is, to have the pleasure of authority without the trouble of doing justice.

His Lordship after several miscellaneous observations, made a direct application of them to the bill then under consideration. He observed, that the modern justices answered precisely to the ancient conservators of the peace, with this difference, that they had many new powers, and he might say personal jurisdictions, added to what the ancient conservators exercised or enjoyed. According to the common law, the sheriff was the principal officer within the county, as he was in several instances, and for several purposes at this very day. In all tortious transactions, in the apprehending felons, and in suppressing all riots, routs, and unlawful assemblies, he was authorised to call to his assistance the *posse comitatus*, or power of the county, to his aid. The same power was vested in the ancient conservators, as the sheriff could not be every where, those conservators exercised in their several districts

districts similar authority; they could, like the sheriff, raise the *posse comitatus*, and call upon every man from sixteen to sixty, to assist in preserving the peace; they could upon view or information, repair to the place where the riot, rout, or unlawful assembly was collected, and proceed to disperse or apprehend the persons thus offending against law; and if no head of a corporation, magistrate, or conservator of the peace was present or to be found, the same power devolved upon the headborough, tithing-man, &c. even down to the petty constable.

It was needless to dwell farther, or to enumerate the various species of magistratical power delegated to, and exercised by the magistrates under the common law; but it was very material to hint at some of the innumerable additional powers, vested by a great number of acts of Parliament, in the justices of the peace. They were, within their several jurisdictions, impowered to call upon all manner of persons, to answer all manner of complaints; they were impowered to try all felonies not deemed capital, or of which conviction did not render the offender subject to the punishment of death; they were judges at the quarter-sessions on all prosecutions for assaults, batteries, &c. they could commit upon complaint, and give orders to apprehend all vagrants, suspicious persons, &c. they could inflict certain inferior punishments, in a great variety of instances too numerous to rehearse, and they were vested with a summary jurisdiction in an immense variety of other cases respecting property.

Having thus endeavoured to shew, that the modern justices of peace had many additional powers vested in him, unknown to the ancient conservator, he recited several clauses out of the acts passed in the reigns of Richard II. Henry IV. V. and VI. to shew that Parliament thought fit to arm the justices with every power necessary for the conservation of the peace; and among others, that of suppressing all riots, routs, and unlawful assemblies; and consequently, that the wisdom, as well as sound policy of our ancestors ought not to be wantonly set aside, which would certainly be the case, if persons not regularly authorised were permitted to act as magistrates.

But he would now proceed to answer the only arguments which, with all his industry, he could foresee would be urged for the present bill.

First, it might be said, that those who would not be obliged to take out a *dedimus potestatem*, agreeably to the tenor

of the present bill, might act in that particular instance only, the suppression of riots, routs, insurrections, &c. that the present bill would not empower them to act in any other respect, but for the purposes declared in the bill; and that it would empower persons of rank and fortune at all times, to preserve the peace of their respective neighbourhoods, which would never be the case, so long as by qualifying themselves, they would be liable to undergo all the laborious and fatiguing duties of a justice of the peace, which they must do if they should take out their *dedimus*.

On the first he would observe, what he before had more than once mentioned, that although no slave to ancient forms, he should ever look with reverence and respect towards those forms which were coeval, he believed, with the constitution, and had stood the test and approbation of ages. Upon this ground, therefore, though no other reason existed, he should, for his part, be extremely cautious in doing what our ancestors, since the commencement of legal memory, never thought of doing; for by the common law, no conservator of the peace could act till he had received his *dedimus potestatem*: it was indeed the very act which created him a conservator, and meant no more than a short address to such or such a person, to keep the peace within a certain county, town or district; besides which, there were to the instant he was speaking, laws regularly enacted for the same purpose, the most ancient of which were upwards of four hundred years standing.

The next probable argument in favour of the bill, he presumed would be, that the persons entitled to act, would be only entitled to act in the particular instance of preserving the peace. Here again he was totally at a loss to know where the exact line could be drawn to separate or distinguish the powers and authorities to be exercised by a modern conservator and a modern justice; for either the power of the former must be limited and nugatory, or it must partake of the general powers of a justice of the peace: For instance, suppose that proofs were offered against a person or persons for intending to raise a riot or insurrection, in that case the persons to be authorized by this bill would either have a right to receive informations upon oath, a species of judicial proceeding, or their appointment would be nugatory. If the former, then the bill would create powers disclaimed by the promoters of it, or it would answer no end. How far their lordships were prepared to give their sanction to such a law, he would not pretend

pretend to say; but he was firmly determined never to consent to swell the statute-book, by enacting a law which would be productive of no good, or which, if operative at all, would create powers contrary or repugnant to its professed design.

The last objection was, that gentlemen and persons of rank who had declined to take out the *dedimus*, would, if the present bill should be passed into a law, have an opportunity of exerting themselves in preserving the public peace; whereas, so long as the laws in being, which prevented them from acting in a magistratical character, without being liable to be called upon to discharge the duties of a justice of the peace, amounted almost to an exclusion. He only stated the possibility of such an argument being resorted to, because, if he should hear it gravely urged, or seriously insisted upon, it would be a sufficient reason to convince him that the bill ought to be rejected.

Not, however, having yet heard any thing offered in support of the bill, though he must confess he expected the contrary, he should reserve whatever else he had to say till an opportunity of entering more particularly into the subject might be afforded him. He would, however, just before he sat down, submit to the noble Duke, whether, considering the vast importance of the bill, of which perhaps his Grace was not aware, it would not be better to get rid of it by the previous question, or postponing it for three months, instead of putting an absolute and direct negative upon it? he only suggested this as a matter of mere choice; for most certainly, if it should come to the question, he would give a negative to the second reading of the bill in some one shape or other.

The Duke of *Manchester* said, the object of the bill was to strengthen the hands of the civil magistrate, and to remove all pretence of calling in the military to aid the execution of the laws upon slight or ordinary occasions. Duke of
Manchester,

His Grace passed many handsome compliments on the abilities of the noble and learned Lord, and expressed his acknowledgements for the information he had now got on the subject.

His Grace described the riots in June last; said the interpolation of the military had then become necessary; but contending at the same time, in very strong terms, that the military power had been carried too far in instances where there were no riots; and where there were, it was exercised too long. It was well known, he said, that the riots were solely
continued

confined to the metropolis, unless in respect of the trifling disturbance at Bath; notwithstanding which, the military superseded indiscriminately throughout the kingdom the interposition of the civil power, even as to the most proper and efficacious means in point of prevention. He censured, in pretty plain terms, the doctrine laid down by a great law authority in that House (Earl Mansfield), that soldiers in martial array might be called in in the character of citizens, to assist in suppressing riots; and said, whatever merit was due to those who applied the remedy to the evil while existing, he never could deem it constitutional to maintain, that soldiers under martial law, and totally at the command of their officers, could, in the proper sense of the word, be deemed citizens; and he would, had he had the honour of a seat in his Majesty's councils, never have consented, much less advised, the employing the military, in the manner, and to the extent in which they had been employed.

He begged leave to repeat, that, in his opinion, some means ought to be devised, to prevent the necessity of calling in the military; and he did not yet despair of seeing the time when such a necessity would no longer subsist:—At present he could only say, that he would accept of the learned Lord's proposition; that of postponing the second reading of the bill to that day three months.

The Lord
Chancellor.

The *Lord Chancellor* then put the question, that said bill be read a second time on that day three months; which was agreed to.

Duke of
Richmond.

The third reading of the militia bill being then moved for, the Duke of *Richmond* rose, and informed their Lordships, that he had, the preceding day, stated his principal objections to the bill before them; but as many of their Lordships had not been then present, he would beg leave just to repeat the substance of what he had said; but before he proceeded, it would not be improper, or unparliamentary, to call into his aid a general proposition, laid down by the noble and learned Lord on the woolsack, which would afford one additional argument in support of the clause he was about to offer by way of amendment to the bill before the House. The learned Lord's words, if he could recollect right, were nearly as follow: "When any old established law was proposed to be altered, it was a law or usage of Parliament, that the person moving a proposition, or presenting a bill for that purpose, should state the necessity, expediency, or policy of such an alteration." The bill before their
Lordships

Lordships came within that description; and if the reason assigned by the learned and noble Lord was a sound one, it applied to both cases, or to neither; but that was out of the question; for the present bill proposed the alteration of a law actually in being, and therefore demanded a strict compliance with the rule.

His Grace then proceeded, and informed the House, that he thought the bill, in its present form, would not have the effect which it was intended to produce. His Grace said, that in the 18th and 19th of his present Majesty, two bills had passed, which declared that the men then raised should not be obliged to serve for more than three years, and that the then expiration of their time should leave them entirely at liberty to return to their former occupations; or to continue as soldiers, if it was thought necessary to hold the militia still embodied. The bill now before the House directed, that the commanding officers of regiments should apply to the respective men under their command, not three weeks, as the old law specified, but even three months previous to the time of expiration, in order to know if they are willing to continue, and what sum they expected as a bounty. And this application, his Grace said, was to be made as well to such whose time was near expiring, as to those whose time of servitude was at a greater distance.

His Grace also said, that the act laid down the specific rules by which the commanding officers were to be guided; all which, his Grace contended, would tend to injure rather than promote the intention of the bill. The grounds on which his Grace opposed it were in substance as follows: He said, that by altering the original mode of recruiting in the manner now proposed, the men would be invited to combine not to serve under less than the very high sum of 18l. which, from all he could learn, they would assuredly insist upon. And when it was known publicly through the militia corps, that a bill which afforded them such an opportunity had passed, they were so cunning and so knowing that they would either not serve, or oblige the man balloted for to find another substitute; which substitute would still insist upon the same high terms, whether he had been or had not been a soldier.

His Grace observed, that although the balloted man had it in option either to serve, to find a substitute, or to pay a fine of 10l. yet, however strange the solecism might appear, it would be more his interest to pay 18l. for a substitute than 10l. as a fine; and for this reason, if he paid for a substitute, the parish

parish was obliged to remit him half the money, provided that half did not exceed 5*l.* and he became exempted from again serving, until every member of this parish had been balloted, which was equal to an exemption for life. But if he paid the fine he was to be called upon again in three years, and then obliged to find another substitute, which would make him a loser; because, in the one case, he must pay but 1*2l.* for life, and in the other, 10*l.* every three years. His Grace observed, that there was not in the present mode of recruiting the militia, any two regiments that adopted the same system. Some obliged the inhabitants to find substitutes; others took 10*l.* in lieu, and for that sum found substitutes; whilst some had reduced the bounty-money, or price of substitutes, to a much lesser sum. Among the latter, was the regiment which he had the honour to command himself; the price of men in which was no more than 5*l.* each. It was, besides, not only the largest battalion, but the most complete in the kingdom, there being now in their shoes the full complement of 800 men. This method of permitting the commanders to make the best bargain they could, was, in his opinion, for he found it so, the cheapest for the service: while it reduced the price of substitutes, prevented combinations, and gave to that regiment which adopted the mode of accepting 10*l.* in lieu of a substitute, an opportunity of creating a stock purse; which fund was most useful, because they were paid out of it ten thousand little incidental charges, that otherwise would become a tax on the nation, and of course must be paid out of the extraordinaries. His Grace understood that there had been some time since a meeting of the militia Colonels at the St. Alban's tavern, where it was allowed, that the best modes of completing or recruiting the militia was that which he took the liberty to suggest; and that the mode now proposed, of specifically laying down particular rules, by which each commanding officer was to be governed, would impede the service, and raise the price of substitutes; it would operate as a notice to the men to enter into a combination, and fix the price of their carrying arms.

The great number of laws already in being respecting the militia, he observed, would fill many volumes in folio, were they put together: notwithstanding which, another law was now proposed to their Lordships consideration, which would swell the code, and add to the difficulty and embarrassment. He professed to have nothing more in view than the good of the service, which could never be more effectually promoted
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than by leaving men at their liberty to act for themselves; because by that means they would have the satisfaction of thinking that they had not been trepanned, but had acted entirely upon their own judgement.

As to the apprehension suggested of the regiments being incomplete, in a moment, when an actual attack may be made, in his opinion it would, if such an apprehension existed, be found to be merely ideal. There was a spirit in this country, which in such a crisis, would effect more than any prospect of reward. If in such a moment of public alarm and public distress, men were wanting to complete the militia corps, which was hardly probable, they would be collected, not by the prospect or expectation of pecuniary reward, but by one of the most powerful motives by which an Englishman could be actuated; a love of his country, a personal pride, and a firm attachment to the constitution, under which he was born, and by which he had been protected. This was not merely an opinion founded in speculation, a recent instance had fully confirmed what he had now asserted. When Plymouth was menaced by the enemy, the last year but one, there were an hundred of the Devonshire militia whose time of servitude was expired, and of course they were at liberty to return to their own homes but what was their conduct in the moment of danger? instead of returning to their wives, families, or relations, they attached themselves to the corps to which they belonged, nor ever quitted it as long as their services were deemed necessary, nor till the enemy were acknowledged to have for some days returned into port. This would always be the case when the men were well treated by their officers, and proper care taken to convince them that no hardship was imposed, but such as was absolutely necessary, or arose from the nature of the service, and ultimately tended of course to the general defence of the kingdom.

His Grace then read a clause, which he meant, he said, to submit to their Lordships, he would not offer it till he knew what the sense of the House would probably be, or rather that of administration, well knowing what little chance of succeeding there would be if administration thought fit to set their face against it;—the proposition he meant to move, by way of clause, was, that it might be made optional,

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and not obligatory in the men, to declare whether they would engage again at the expiration of the term for which they engaged.

Lord Stormont.

Lord *Stormont* said, he had considered maturely the objection which the noble Duke yesterday made, and had consulted others, who, from their great military knowledge must be competent judges, but he could not, for his own part, nor could those to whom he had applied, find out that mischief which his Grace had stated to be the probable consequence of passing the bill. In his apprehension the noble Duke had taken up his opposition on what it was difficult to understand. The bill in question, was merely to this effect: it required the men to be balloted for six months before they were wanted, and the noble Lord, and his friends thought it requisite because it was impolitic as well as dangerous "to let the expiration of the present troops, serving, run out before the nation was secure of substitutes to succeed them;" for in such a case, the kingdom might be left in a defenceless state. His Lordship said, that the present bill did not prevent commanding officers from making what bargain they pleased; nor did it in any respect alter any of those former modes that were conducive to recruiting the militia; it only provided against possible danger, and in that case ought to meet the concurrence of the House. His Lordship farther said, that he endeavoured to collect the noble Duke's meaning in his objections of yesterday, and wished to coincide with them if they were proper; but that on the closest investigation, there could not be any reason found for acceding to his Grace's proposed clause.

Duke of Richmond.

The Duke of *Richmond* replied, that the optional clause, which he would have introduced, would answer every purpose desired; that it would be an imposition upon those who had served, or had been balloted in; that it would increase the price of substitutes double, if not treble, and hurt the recruiting service; that, for his part, the price paid to substitutes in the regiment he commanded, was no more than five guineas; and at the instant he was speaking he did not want a single man; yet he was doubtful that the present bill would soon affect the recruiting service in such a manner that he should not be surpris'd as soon as it was pass'd, if twelve or fourteen pounds were demanded.

The question was then put on the third reading, and agreed to without a division.

March

March 28.

This day a motion was made by Lord *Mansfield*, that the petitions of the several parties, claiming the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, be heard at the bar of that House by counsel, on Wednesday the 2d of May.

The report on the Ilmington enclosing bill being received from the committee, the Lord Chancellor gave notice, that he would on Friday, move to have the same re-committed, and would of course give orders that their Lordships be summoned for that day,

March 29.

This day his Majesty came to the House, and gave the royal assent to the custom, discount, and five per cent. excise bills, and a few other public and private bills.

March 30.

As soon as the order of the day, for receiving the report of the Ilmington inclosure bill was read, the Bishop of *St. David's*, *David's* [Doctor Warren] rose, and made a short prefatory discourse, in which he acquainted the House; that as the mode of commuting tythes for lands in bills of inclosure had long appeared to him to be very improper on many accounts, and as this mode was adopted in this bill now under consideration, he had proposed in the committee above stairs, on Wednesday last, to amend the bill, by leaving out all the clauses in which land is given to the Rector, by way of compensation for his tythes; but the amendment not being agreed to, his design now was to make a motion for re-committing the bill, and had for this purpose desired to have the House summoned.

After this preface, he observed, that the rights of the church in general, and of the parochial clergy in particular, were involved in this question; and he had therefore, he was sure, no occasion for making any apology for the trouble he was going to give the House. He stated that tythes were the constitutional maintenance of ecclesiastical persons in this country; that the law for compelling the payment of them was at least of a thousand years standing. That the doctrine in Westminster-hall, and all our law books, was, that all lands are tythable *jure communi*; and in compliance with this notion, and agreeably to this maxim of law, when inclosures were first made, incumbents were always permitted

to take the tythes of the lands inclosed, in the same manner as when open; adding, that it had been the uninterrupted custom till lately to have inclosed lands subject to the payment of tythes in kind: he believed the innovation was not of more than thirty years standing.

The first reason was, that this practice tended to bring land into mortmain; which was one reason among many why our ancestors thought tythes the best and properest maintenance of ecclesiastical persons.

Secondly, commuting tythes for lands was improper, as tending to render our clergy more secular, the income arising therefrom being easily managed. The incumbents neither plough, sow, nor reap, but when employed in country business, from one end of the year to the other; and thus immersed in worldly affairs, it will take them off from the faithful discharge of the duties of their sacred functions; and though they might free themselves from this trouble by letting their lands, yet, considering the scanty incomes of many of the parochial clergy, they would be induced to occupy these allotments themselves, with a view to make a better provision for their families.

Thirdly, a compensation in land would open a door to fraud. Parishes of any considerable extent he said, consisted partly of old inclosures, and partly of common fields; and when these last were inclosed, and made exempt from the payment of tythes, it was usual for the occupiers to threaten the incumbents to plough up the new inclosures only, which are now become tythe free, and to keep the new inclosures in grass, they being subject to tythe, unless the incumbents will consent to let the occupiers have their corn tythes in the old inclosures at a very low price. This was a very obvious piece of craft, and was practised every day to the great detriment of the parochial clergy.

He next objected to this practice of giving lands in lieu of tythes, because it often tempted the incumbent to collude with the patron.

Patrons are frequently lords of the manor, and, as such, are commonly the principal proprietors of the land. This being the case, the patron forms a design of inclosing the parish, and communicates it to the incumbent, who readily consents, and only asks, that care may be taken that the allotment to be made in lieu of his tythes may be equal in value to them. The patron promises to take care of this, and to free the incumbent from all apprehensions, engages to farm
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the allotment of him at as high a rent as he ever made of the tythes in the best times. The inclosure takes place, and the patron hires the allotment of the incumbent on the fair terms he proposed. In a few years the incumbent dies, or is removed; a new incumbent succeeds, who proposes to let the allotment at the same price his predecessor had done, but finds that he cannot get so much by half, and finds also that it is really worth no more. As the facility of practising this sort of collusion flowed from a bare consideration of the case, it was remarked that there was no occasion to produce any instance, since the possibility was sufficient in point of argument; but if it were necessary, his Lordship added, that he had an instance now in his mind, which, if it were required, he would mention.

A fifth reason might be drawn from a consideration of the difficulty of cultivating the allotted lands in such a manner as to make them of real benefit to the incumbents.

It had been usual to insert in the inclosure bills, a clause for enabling the incumbent, with the consent of his diocesan, to let the allotment for twenty-one years. This latitude was given, that the person who might rent it should have sufficient encouragement to treat the land in a good husband-like manner. The incumbent would be glad to occupy it himself, in order to add a little to his present income; but as it would perhaps require seven or eight hundred pounds to stock a farm of this kind properly, it would be totally impracticable, very few of the parochial clergy being able to advance half that sum; consequently when the terms are expired, the incumbent under such circumstances will be under the necessity of letting his compensation in land much below its true value. It sometimes happened, that when even his allotment was fenced in, that nobody would offer himself as tenant; an instance of the kind having come to his knowledge in the diocese of Lincoln; which as it produces nothing, had caused the performance of divine service to be discontinued; adding, that if so many inconveniencies were found in this mode, though in its infancy, instances of the kind would continue to multiply, when the barns erected on these allotments became ruinous, and the fences out of repair. Whereas if the old mode of taking the tythes in kind, or commuting them for money had been continued, not one of these inconveniencies could have happened.

His Lordship proceeded to answer such objections as he thought would be made to his proposal; and under this head went through all the cases of inclosure. First, he considered parishes

parishes consisting of open field lands only; next, parishes consisting of old inclosures and open fields; and lastly, parishes consisting of old inclosures, commons, and waste grounds; and endeavoured to shew, that in all these cases the incumbent, whether rector or vicar, would reap more advantage from having the tythes than an allotment in land, except in parishes consisting of open fields only, and as there were very few parishes of that description, no great inconvenience would arise, if land or a corn rent were given by way of compensation for the tythes in those cases.

Tythes had been considered by many as a very improper maintenance for the clergy, because they were apt to produce disputes, and breed much ill will between a pastor and his flock; and an allotment therefore in land was much to be wished. He confessed that this argument had weight as well within as without doors, but still he contended, that it was a very fallacious one. He remarked, that the incumbent always asked a reasonable price for his tythes, because he always asked less than an impropietor did, in all cases under the same circumstances; and if it sometimes happened that a suit was instituted by the incumbent for the recovery of his dues, it generally proved in the end, that the occupiers were to blame, since out of seven hundred tythe causes which have been tried in Westminster-Hall, six hundred and sixty were determined in favour of the incumbents; and therefore it appears to be particularly hard that a remedy which is so detrimental to the real interests and rights of the parochial clergy should be made use of, on a pretence of establishing peace, when the fact is, that the peace and quiet of a parish has hardly, in any one instance, been interrupted by the incumbents themselves.

That tythes, in the hands of a discreet and judicious clergyman, instead of breeding quarrels, he was persuaded, might, and often had, proved the firmest bond of union and friendship between the pastor and his flock. Such a man would always confine his demands within the bounds of moderation, would shew his parishioners how kindly he treated them, by comparing his demands with those which their neighbours were proud to submit to, who happen to live in a parish where the tythes are in the hands of an impropietor; and by means of these communications, and a little yielding on each side, it is easy to conceive what mutual esteem and regard may be thus raised between the incumbent and his parishioners. But when the tythes are taken away, this
cement -

cement is broken; these opportunities of communication are at an end; and as the parishioners are independent of their minister, so the minister is independent of them. They will certainly soon forget the relation they stand in to him, and he will perhaps too soon forget the relation he stands in to them; and instead of being an adviser or counsellor, and a friend, he will sink into the common mass of farmers, and be as little respected and regarded at the meanest among them.

He begged leave to remind their Lordships, that about sixty years ago, a bill, known now by the name of a Tythe Bill, passed the House of Commons; the object of this bill was to make all lands tythe free, for which no tythes had been paid for the last forty years, and to give all money payments in lieu of tythes the force of a modus, in case the payment had been invariably the same for forty years. The only argument made use of in the House of Commons was, that this bill would effectually establish peace and harmony in every parish. When this bill was brought up to the Lords, they would not impose on others, nor be imposed on themselves, by a fallacious argument drawn from peace, but shewed themselves the true guardians and protectors of the rights of the church, by rejecting the bill with the utmost indignation.

He would trouble their Lordships no farther at this time, against the principle of the bill, as far as it related to the commuting of tythes for lands, though he made no doubt of being able to prove how exceptionable the bill was on other accounts; but as he expected this matter would be fully taken up by other Lords, and undergo a full and impartial investigation in the course of this debate, he should offer nothing on that head; he nevertheless thought proper to observe, before he sat down, that if the bill were really and truly unexceptionable in all respects, yet if the principle he had been combating was wrong and improper, the amendment proposed by him in the committee on Wednesday last ought to have been received; the persons concerned in this bill, it was true, might say that they had rather have no bill than a bill thus amended; this, in his apprehension, would amount to a declaration that it would not be worth their while to inclose, unless they were permitted to make some encroachments upon the property of others, in order to add to their own.

The right reverend prelate concluded a speech of considerable length with expressing his thanks to the House for their great indulgence, assuring their Lordships that nothing but the zeal for the ancient and constitutional rights of the church in general, and of the truly respectable and useful order of men, the parochial clergy in particular, could have prevailed on him to have trespassed on their patience in the manner and to the extent he had done.

The Bp. of
Peterborough

The bishop of *Peterborough* (Dr. Hinchcliff) rose in reply. He professed a willingness to meet his learned friend on the principle of the bill. He said, for his part, he took its probable operation to be directed a way very different from that which had been chalked out by the learned prelate. He could never discover from what had fallen within his observation, but there were many other instances to which the principle of the present bill might, in the nature of things, possibly extend where clergymen were land-holders and occupiers in their clerical character; several of them had glebe land, which they either cultivated themselves or let out to others. In the present case there was no compulsion upon a clergyman more than any other; that because he possessed a landed estate for life, that therefore he was obliged to keep it in his own hands to occupy or cultivate it.

In his opinion it was optional, and he was no more obliged to cultivate his lands, to raise the produce of them, and sell it, than any other person who now heard him. On the contrary, if he took his tythe in kind, he was obliged, as the learned prelate observed, to collect it at no small trouble, and often attended with great vexation; and as he could not consume any considerable part of it, he necessarily sent the rest to market, or sold it at his own house. Here he acted in the capacity of a farmer, as to the sale; and considering all circumstances, he doubted much whether the toil, labour, and anxiety, was much less in one way than the other. By having a compensation in land, he avoided many inconveniences, and one in particular which materially affected his ecclesiastical character, nay tended to defeat the sole object of the institution of ecclesiastical persons.

It was often of very little consequence, that a clergyman was a good man; that he was benevolent, kind, meek, and generous; that he possessed every christian and moral virtue; that he laboured incessantly, as well by precept as example, in the care and instruction of his flock. If he preached like

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an angel, he would often, indeed almost always, preach in vain, while those to whom he addressed himself had conceived prejudices and resentments against him; and for what? because only he was a partaker of their property and labours. He presumed he need not press this point upon his learned brethren; they knew it. It was notorious, and familiarised by common observation and experience. The interest of the incumbent was deemed incompatible with the interest of his parishioners; and the merit of the ecclesiastic was viewed through a wrong and partial medium, when his fair, legal, established claims, came to be balanced against the interest of his parishioners. The pastor was in short totally sunk in the tythe collector; and not what he recommended, but what he sought or demanded was the object which generally was kept up to the eye of those called upon to discharge it.

• Another material circumstance he begged leave to mention to their Lordships was this: that by the superstitions and acts of the regular clergy in the times of popish ignorance, the secular clergy were robbed or defrauded of their rights. He thought fit to mention this on two accounts: first, to remind their Lordships that the injury done to the secular clergy in those times was afterwards confirmed by Henry VIII. He put an end to the existence of the regular clergy, but perpetuated the injustice; for, instead of rendering to the church what had been unjustly taken by monkish fraud, he created lay impropriations, the possessors of whom retain the property originally intended for the maintenance of the secular or parochial clergy.

This produced a kind of mixed property, which was now distinguished by the appellations of rectorial and vicarial; that is to say, the lay impropriator, who stood in the shoes of the regular popish clergy, frequently held the great tythes; while the vicar, to whom was committed the care of souls, received only the small ones.

The bill now before the House, and every other bill of a similar nature would, in some measure, remedy that defect; it would make a certain provision for the vicar, whereas if the vicar had, suppose for instance, the tythe of corn, the corn-land might be thrown into grass, to which he could have no claim; or *vice versa*, grass-land might be broke up, and thrown into corn, to the exclusive benefit of the lay impropriator, and to the injury, or, in some instances, even ruin of the vicar,

This was, in its present shape, a most grievous evil, and along with all the other mortifications the vicar suffered, left him at the mercy of his parishioners; for in many cases he was persuaded, if the parish thought fit to confederate against their pastor, they might easily deprive him of the means of subsistence according to local and other circumstances.

On the contrary, by setting out his portion in land, his income would be better secured; he might let or occupy as he thought fit or convenient; and his having no call or demand on his parishioners, would render him independent; he meant, give him that sort of independence which would enable him to discharge his duty, because he would there stand in relation to his parishioners as a man of property, in the same light with every other man, upon his moral character and means of livelihood. He would possess, besides the advantages arising from his clerical character, which would smooth the way to that species of influence or authority every pastor, to be successful, should have over his flock; because every object of worldly contention or personal interest, being removed, whatever he said would be attended to with that degree of deference and respect, which was due to a person who had no other motive to admonish, to persuade, or reprehend, but what was ultimately directed to the spiritual benefit of those who were committed to his care.

The Earl of
Baltimore-
land.

The Earl of *W. Stmoreland* perfectly coincided in sentiment, he said, with the learned prelate who spoke last. He was satisfied of the justice, and was convinced still more of the expediency and sound policy of passing inclosure-bills in general, and of setting out to the parson a certain portion of land in lieu of tythes. Land would always bear a certain and proportionate value; and was not like money which was constantly undergoing changes in respect of its relative worth; such a mode of commutation would likewise be productive of many other consequences of a very beneficial and desirable nature, so far as it would operate towards promoting a good understanding between the clergyman and his parishioners, which would give additional weight to his doctrines, and create a proper respect for his person and example.

Taking tythe in kind, or commutations in money, he considered as a source of perpetual strife and ill-will, and as the cause of inveterate and incurable disagreements between the pastor and his parishioners. It was hardly to be expected that the flock could be much edified by the instructions of

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a man whom they considered as their daily oppressor, and sharing with them the fruits of their laborious industry; nor on the other hand could it be expected that the pastor would be so sanguine in conveying his spiritual benefits to those who were constantly devising new means to harass, tease, and perplex him. It was not to be expected, nor could human belief be so far stretched as to presume that men would be converted to good ways, nor the preacher listened to with reverence and respect, when he was the perpetual object of their personal enmity, and the supposed author of the heaviest grievances they had to complain of.

In other respects taking tythe in kind, or commuting it for money, where the farmer was obliged to pay nearly the full value, was a great discouragement to agriculture and every species of improvement. It must be very obvious to every noble lord who heard him, that the land-owner and landholder were frequently deterred from improving their farms or estates, merely on account that it would create or lay the foundation of a tax upon their own property; for instance, suppose a man laid out a considerable sum of money to improve a freehold or leasehold estate; in that case he would, besides having the interest of the money laid out to charge on the improvement, have an additional tax laid by the rector or vicar; which, as he observed before, must continue to operate as a discouragement to the reclaiming of barren lands, and an higher cultivation of grounds more capable of improvement. But when this odious and unpopular tax was, instead of being arbitrary, at the will of every new incumbent, and as it frequently happened, was annually exercised according to the caprice, litigious disposition, or avarice of the same incumbent; when the sum was fixed, and tax certain, not contingent, the land-holder or farmer then proceeded with zeal and alacrity, under the idea of perfect security, that he was working, toiling, and advancing his money for himself and not for another. He did not rest his argument upon theory or hypothetical reasoning, he would appeal to every noble lord present, if this was not the case in a greater or less degree in his own neighbourhood, and where inclosures had taken place, whether the face of the country was not totally changed for the better, and whether of course more grain in the corn inclosures; and more grass, where the rearing and feeding of cattle and sheep were preferred, was not the consequence? There were other reasons equally cogent which might be urged, both for the inclosing

of land and the apportioning a certain part of the land so inclosed to clergymen; he should content himself with briefly hinting at one, and it was this; that the man who had a certain number of acres which he could call his own in the first instance, and free from tythe in the second, would prize it more than double the quantity in common, and subject to pay tythe, and that on a very simple and obvious account, because the labour, industry, and money laid out upon it, would be all his own as well as the soil, and he would thereby have an opportunity of adding to the value of his estate, which would be impossible so long as the soil continued to be unascertained, and remained liable to be taxed by the rector or vicar in a sum, in many instances, equal to the annual value of the soil.

Earl of
Coventry.

The Earl of *Coventry* on the same side, went over partly the same ground, and expressed, in very warm terms, his perfect approbation of commutations in preference to tythes, particularly commutations in land; and experience in this, as well as in all worldly transactions he said, was the best guide; considering it merely in that light, he therefore believed it would be found almost universally true, that in those parishes where commutations had taken place, they were productive of peace, good will, and good neighbourhood; that the pastor was happier, more respected, and in fact easier in his circumstances, while his parishioners remained no less contented than amicably disposed towards him.

The learned prelate, who opened the debate, seemed to lay great stress upon one circumstance, which was, that by making the parson a land-owner, it would draw his attention to the cultivation of his land, and of course occasion him to neglect the sacred functions of his ministry. He believed when the tythe was taken in kind, it rather made against the conclusion drawn by the learned prelate than for it; but even supposing that not to be the case, he could easily conceive, that his attending to his worldly affairs for six days of the week, might be well dispensed with, if he dedicated the seventh to discharge the functions of his ministry, which day was set apart by God himself for that purpose. The clergy, taken in the aggregate, were besides a very numerous body, and notwithstanding the very high reverence and respect he entertained for them, he did not know, when not actually employed in their proper vocation, how they could pass their time better than in rendering themselves useful members of society, and attending to those concerns which every man of every description was bound

bound to perform : in short, though the parson might act as a farmer for six days in the week, and thereby render himself a useful member of the community and serviceable to his family, he would not by that be prevented from instructing his parishioners in religion and morality on the seventh. He would indeed, in his opinion, by such a meritorious conduct unite example and precept, and of course convey to his flock practical as well as theoretical instruction.

The *Lord Chancellor* being in his place observed, that when a point of such great and extensive importance came before their Lordships, it was fitting their Lordships dignity to treat it in a stile of gravity suited to a subject, the decision of which might effect great numbers of the most respectable members of the state in one point of view, no less than the whole body of the clergy of England, the whole of the landed interest, no inconsiderable discription of men, and all those who rented lands, and who obtained a livelihood by agriculture or grazing. There might be occasions in which levity might be excusable, though he confessed, for his part, he should ever wish to see it avoided within those walls as much as possible ; but at present, whether it arose from a stile of thinking and acting peculiar to himself, he could not avoid remarking, it appeared to him, that jesting on the present occasion was ill timed, and laughing indecent.*

The question to discuss, to which their Lordships were called by summons, was such as called for much serious consideration ; he was extremely pleased therefore to perceive so full an attendance, for he thought it not solely impertinent to declare, that in all cases, in which he had the misfortune to differ from the noble Lords when the House was indifferently attended, he felt much on two accounts ; first that his opinion might have undue weight and bias that of others, and in such an event, that his errors should, for the want of more able assistance and a full House, pass as the mature decided sense of their Lordships.

This was a species of internal responsibility, which he would never wish to be loaded with, and was, he protested, the occasion of creating much uneasiness in his mind ; and it was no small consolation to him in the midst of attendances, which

* This part of his Lordship's speech was by way of animadversion on the effect of what fell from the noble Lord who spoke before him, who had approved of the clergy being employed in their worldly affairs six days of the week, and the seventh in discharging their spiritual duties ; which caused a loud laugh.

which had proved for weeks past so remarkably thin, that so many noble Lords had thought the bill worthy of their notice; his satisfaction was still the more increased in hearing the subject so fully, and in his apprehension so ably discussed by the learned Prelate who opened the debate. The arguments urged by the reverend Prelate, seemed to have been the result of laborious research, and deep and sober investigation; which, as long as Christianity continued to be the established religion of this country, must at all times, and on every proper or necessary occasion, challenge in a peculiar manner the attention of the legislature, particularly of that House.

Taking the matter up in that point of view, as involving in it the interests of so respectable a set of men as the clergy of this kingdom, the greatest guardians of the religion of the state, and the morals of the people committed to their care: it becomes an object of singular importance; but without having any intention to travel out of the question, in order to pay a compliment to persons habited in lawn sleeves or in any other dress than the rest of mankind, the question with him would be, what are the rights of the clergy, as derived by the constitution and confirmed by law; That, and that only, was the sole object, as he apprehended, fit or worthy of their Lordships consideration. This should be undertaken free from all partiality or prejudices, private views or local interests. In this temper he was determined to take up the question, and if he should mistake the real object, he trusted those who heard him would impute it to its real cause, that of incapacity, and not from a design to mislead.

His Lordship begged, before he proceeded to debate the question, to add a single word, which would remind their Lordships of the difference of opposing a measure openly, and endeavouring to defeat it by underhand means and managements, acting behind a mask from motives of hypocrisy, and others of the most disingenuous kind, [supposed to mean a certain noble Earl, who afterwards spoke in the debate:] for his own part, he should not act in that manner, but was determined to meet the question fairly and take the sense of the House upon it.

The learned Prelate was fully justified in saying, that the right of the clergy were coeval with the constitution, and had since the first establishment of Christianity in this kingdom, a period of upwards of one thousand years, been vested in the manner in which they were claimed and enjoyed at present;

present ; and though the Lateran council, held in the eleventh century, ascertained the rights of the clergy in a more precise and specific manner, with the consent and approbation of all the sovereign princes of Christendom, yet the final settlement then made and ratified by all the parties concerned, was rather a recognition of rights already exercised and enjoyed, than creating new ones which had not been before submitted to and acknowledged.

Thenceforward the property of ecclesiastics, and ecclesiastical bodies and corporations, stood upon as strong foundations as those which supported or secured to the possessors of any other species of property whatever, and so it continued with out interruption till the time of the reformation. At the dissolution of the monasteries, it was true, as had been hinted early in the debate, a great part of the patrimony of the church went into the hands of lay impropiators, and soon after, so early as the beginning of the reign of queen Elizabeth, the lay patrons and others interested in the event, wished to put matters still farther, and as it were to strip the church of almost every thing she possessed, by pretended compositions, modusses, not supported by prescriptions; and collusive bargains and agreements between the incumbent for the time being, and every person who might have it in his power to force or delude the person in possession, to defeat or injure the interest of his successor ; those frauds at last became so destructive and numerous, that the legislature was obliged to interpose, and by laws enacted for the purpose to prevent all fraudulent or collusive bargains made by the person in possession, to the detriment or injury of his eventual successor ; in which, among other things, the bishops or chapters were prevented from making longer leases than for twenty-one years, and the rectors and vicars longer than for seven, so as to bind those who were to come after them. The rent or equivalent reserved was not to be less than that paid by his predecessor, nor was any modus hereafter to be considered as such which could not be proved to have existed at the time of the passing of the act, and previous to that act which could not be traced up to what in law was understood by legal memory. The universities for the same reasons were restricted from making any commutation or receiving any compensation but in corn, which was to bear a proportion to the current value ; that is, wheat was estimated at a certain price, (we believe six shillings and eight pence a quarter) and so many quarters were to constitute the reserved
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rent, and whatever the corn came to at the future current price at the next market town, the university were to be paid to the amount in money. Hence the rights and property of the church, and of ecclesiastical and other learned bodies, if they were not restored, whatever part of them remained, were in a great measure secured against future fraudulent alienations, and proved a strong proof of the wisdom and sound policy of the framers of those laws; exhibited beyond a possibility of doubt, that the evils they were intended to correct existed and pointed out the necessity of keeping a cautious and jealous eye upon all those, who under the pretext, would endeavour to alter the tenure, by which the ecclesiastical polity was maintained. Innovations attempted upon ancient establishments, furnished at all times good ground of alarm, and if no other argument could be ad vanced in support of it, the conduct and caution of our ancestors held out an example worthy of modern imitation.

His Lordship after having given a most able account of the first formation of the ecclesiastical polity of this country, and of the various changes it underwent, as to the different modes adopted, but in which he contended the principle in a single instance had never been departed from; next turned his attention to the mode in which private bills were permitted to make their way through both Houses, and that in matters in which property was concerned, to the great injury of many, if not the total ruin of some private families; many proofs of this evil had come to his knowledge as a member of the other House, not a few in his professional character, before he had the honour of a seat in that House, nor had he been a total stranger to such evils since he was called upon to preside in another place. He did not recollect the twentieth part of them, but he could not forbear stating a few, which had recently challenged his recollection. Through the latter channel he had learned, that there was a family of the name of Gardiner, in Wales, which had been stripped of its whole property by the compendious and certain operation of a private bill. This surely must have proceeded from the most criminal inattention, for he could not attribute it to a criminal intention, to ruin the unfortunate and distressed; indeed, he believed, he might point out with certainty to one source of the evil, he meant the facility, or rather rapidity with which private bills were hurried through the committees of the other House, where it was not infrequent to decide upon the merits of a bill, which would affect the property

perty and interests of persons inhabiting a district of several miles in extent, in less time than it took him to determine upon the propriety of issuing an order for a few pounds, by which no man's property could be injured. He begged leave while he was on this part of his subject, to state a particular fact which was reported to him upon an authority which no person who heard him would, he believed, question, after he mentioned the voucher's name; a man, he would be bold to say, one of the most upright and honest members in either House of Parliament, whether those epithets were applied to him in his public or private character; after he said, he presumed, as the matter arose in a committee of the other House, it would be unnecessary to add, that the gentleman he alluded to was Sir George Savile; the circumstance was this: in a committee on a private bill, a man habited rather meanly attended the committee, and seemed to be more anxious and interested in the business going on than what generally happens in the case of a by-stander, whom mere curiosity might have drawn thither. The bill took up some time before the members agreed to a report, yet the stranger was not absent scarcely an instant; at length when the committee had finished, the stranger betrayed visible emotions and an apparent distress of mind. The worthy Baronet interrogated the man upon the cause of his seeming embarrassment, who informed him, that a particular clause in the bill which had just passed the committee, would involve him and his family to a certain ruin; that when he heard such a bill had been introduced into the House, he was aware of what he had been just then a witness to; that having no means of conveyance, he was necessitated to walk up to London on foot, and not having money was not able to fee counsel to defend his rights. The worthy Baronet made farther inquiries, and finding the poor man's story to be well founded, removed all the impediments that stood in his way, by which means an innocent, indigent man and his family were rescued from destruction.

His Lordship adduced one or two other instances of a similar tendency, and proceeded to make several observations on the bill now before their Lordships, and which the learned Prelate moved to re-commit: he first examined the preamble, which described the property intended to be divided, containing in the whole fifty-two yards lands; containing likewise a recital of the names of the parties, namely, the lord of the manor, the patron of the living, and the incumbent or rector. The bill then states the names of five

persons, who have a right to the common fields in commonable land, to be inclosed, which fields are to be divided among the said proprietors.

He observed that in the said recital, it was taken for granted, that the patron and incumbent were entitled to certain glebe-lands; to tythes great and small, or modusses. His Lordship then proceeded to examine paragraph by paragraph, every provision of the bill, animadverting and pointing out some acts of injustice, partiality, obscurity, or cause of confusion in each. But as the particular bill itself was not the object of debate, but the principle of commutation and giving a portion of land in lieu of tythes; we shall pass over that part of his Lordship's speech, as being totally irrelative to the debate on the principle of the bill.

His Lordship having finished his animadversions on the clauses, proceeded next to answer some of the arguments resorted to by those noble Lords who spoke in reply to the learned Prelate that moved the recommendation. In answer to the learned Prelate who spoke second [Peterborough] respecting the advice given by him to the clergy of his diocese, to conciliate as much as possible the good will of their parishioners, by commuting their tythes at a reasonable value; he was ready to approve of the conciliatory advice, though he must be of opinion, that the surrender of a man's property was rather a novel mode of obtaining peace and good neighbourhood; he doubted much, however, if a permanent peace would be obtained, so long as the peace-maker had any thing to give away, or those who were only to be reconciled in this manner had any thing to ask. But allowing this advice to have been sound and wholesome, and to be upheld by facts, confirmed by experience within the diocese over which the learned Prelate so happily presided, it might not be the exact case in other dioceses; nay, not even within his own, unless he could undertake to say, that he gave the advice generally to all the clergy under his pastoral charge, and that it was universally followed and approved of by the clergy. as well as their respective parishioners: otherwise, unless the learned Prelate meant to lay it down in the broad manner he had described, his advice, or the opinion on which his advice was founded, meant no more than an individual opinion of what was proper to be adopted, but what might not be adopted; on the contrary, it might be possible, that great numbers of the clergy within his diocese, had cultivated peace and good neighbour-

neighbourhood within their respective parishes, though they still continued to take their tythes in kind, in preference to commutations in land or money.

He dwelt much on the absurdity of supposing that peace and good neighbourhood, reverence and respect, could be ensured or obtained in no other manner but by a surrender of a man's property, as if men were only to be bribed into a discharge of their religious and moral duties, by means so extraordinary and unprecedented in every other walk of life.

His Lordship having spoke for a full hour and three quarters, said, he did not doubt, be the fate of the bill what it might hereafter, that their Lordships would agree to the recommitment proposed by the learned Prelate. He thought it his duty to take notice how very anxious those were, who opposed the re-commitment, to found all their arguments upon the general principle of inclosure bills of modern date, the giving a compensation in land in lieu of tythes; whereas the principle here was totally out of the question: the question before the House was, not whether their Lordships should re-commit, in order to restore the tythes to the patron or incumbent, but whether the House approving of that principle, would pass a bill totally faulty in every other respect; and it was on this ground alone, that he trusted their Lordships would send back the bill to a committee, to prevent the injustice, to correct the errors, and to reconcile the inconsistencies which it must remain fraught with, if passed in its present form. He said, if he should be defeated, he should not be at all dissatisfied; all he wanted to be informed of, was, the reason of his defeat. He had no interest one way or the other: he was under no predilection which could mislead him, or direct him to an improper object: nothing more, he solemnly protested, than an anxious desire to discharge his duty. If he was beat by fair argument, he should cheerfully submit; and if he should hear any thing urged in the shape of argument sufficient to combat his opinions, he would acknowledge his error; if not, he should endeavour to answer them to the best of his abilities.

Lord *Dudley* said, he rose to vindicate the committee upstairs, whose conduct seemed to be in some measure censured, as having, like other committees in other places, acted hastily and precipitately. He did not presume that the learned and noble Lord meant to direct a particular charge against that committee; but if committees in general upon private bills,

Lord
Dudley.

acted without due information and inquiry, and if the present bill was so very exceptionable as the learned Lord had described it; it was not stretching the inference too far to say, that the committee were so far blameable, as not to correct the errors after they were pointed out to them. He believed, however, that the very contrary was the fact, for he was a witness to the great care and circumspection taken in respect of private bills, which he assured their Lordships, as a member of that committee, was not at all relaxed: consequently, there was not the least colour for any imputation direct or implied, of neglect, hurry, or inattention; the committee having waited and patiently heard every tittle of evidence offered to their consideration.

Had the learned Lord, for whose abilities he entertained the highest respect, thought fit to suggest any objection in the committee, he said no doubt but whatever his Lordship might have offered, would be received with all due attention; but as his Lordship had neglected what was much more proper to be urged in the committee than on the report, he confessed, great as the noble Lord's authority was, he had heard as yet nothing sufficient to induce him to change his opinion, nor was he convinced by any argument which fell from the noble and learned Lord, that the bill was founded in absurdity, injustice, contradiction, or confusion.

The clause offered by the learned Prelate who opened the debate was rejected, and the learned Prelate wished to have the bill re-committed, in order to give him an opportunity of again moving the clause; yet almost every noble Lord present, agreed with him that the clause was totally unnecessary; notwithstanding which, it is the only ostensible reason urged by the learned Prelate for sending the bill a second time to the committee.

On the whole, when the advantages and disadvantages of inclosure bills were candidly considered, impartially weighed, and opposed to each other, he could not help confessing his astonishment, that any noble Lord who was interested in bills of the kind, or was a witness to the great benefits derivable from individual cultivation, and a specification of property, could hesitate an instant in perceiving on which side the scale had clearly and decidedly preponderated.

The Earl of *Sandwich* made a very pointed discourse, part of which seemed to be directed to the woolpack: He said he could never approve, as long as he had the honour of a seat in that House, of motions which might, in their aspect and tendency,

tendency, embroil and destroy the peace and quiet of the country. He said, a very considerable part of the landed property of the kingdom was held under acts of inclosure. A great part of his own estate was of that tenure. It had been an open country, and was in a very rapid state of progressive cultivation and improvement. There were a great many instances which came within his own knowledge, of the evils which arose from the clergy being obliged to take tythes, and he was persuaded, that they would never be so effectually removed as by a general commutation by land or money. He would ever support the just rights of the clergy; for in supporting them, he should maintain the cause of religion and virtue. Their rights and property were as sacred and inalienable as any one of their Lordships. They were derived from the constitution, and must be maintained or fall with it, and he was ready to risk his fortune and his life in their support!

Among numerous instances of the hardships and injuries the clergy daily suffered, he would mention a singular one which came within his own knowledge. It was in the parish of Turrington, in the Isle of Ely: this parish was insulated and surrounded by high ditches and deep dykes. The living, if the tythe was fairly collected or commuted for money or land, would, he believed, produce 2000*l.* per ann. yet, out of this property, he was persuaded, that the rector procured from it but a mere pittance. He made one attempt to do himself justice, but it miscarried. He attended to take his tythes in kind, but the farmers constructed bridges across the dykes, in order to remove their crops, leaving the tythe for the clergyman; which, when they effected, they demolished the temporary bridges, and then left the clergyman to get his property as well as he could, which was out of his power, unless such part as he was able to convey over the bridges while the farmers were drawing home the harvest.

It was with no small degree of embarrassment he ventured to differ from the noble Lord on the woollack; nor should he have rose had he not been invited, as it were, to give an opinion on the subject; by the manner the noble Lord had treated it. The noble Lord, from his habits of life, had not an opportunity of being acquainted with several circumstances necessary for a clear and perfect understanding of the receiving tythes in kind, and commuting for them in land or money; and he thought it incumbent to make this observation,

tion, the rather because, he was sure, if the learned Lord was in possession of those circumstances and facts so necessary to form a judgement of what was fit to be done, the learned Lord's feelings, his humanity, and his eager desire to promote peace, happiness, and good neighbourhood, would have led him to give his warmest support to the bill, instead of opposing it. He hoped the learned Lord would excuse him; but, for want of proper information, he found himself obliged to declare, that as far as he was able to form a judgement on the subject, his Lordship had conceived notions extremely repugnant to those he would and must have conceived, had he been sufficiently informed on the subject.

The noble and learned lord, in his zeal for what he conceived to be the rights of the clergy, treated the supposed differences arising between the incumbent and his parishioners as so many weak and childish apprehensions. He would not enter into a discussion how far those bickerings and disputes were always well founded: but this he was free to say, that many persons, and some of them able, well-informed, and instructed by the most unerring authority, that of experience and ocular demonstration, would be apt to consider arguments founded in alarm and apprehension for the rights of the church, full as weak and unfounded, if not more weak and childish, than any which had been suggested to shew the expediency and sound policy of adopting every measure consistent with the rights of the respective parties, which might promise to remove all causes of discontent and parish-controversy.

He had mentioned one instance of a case which came within his own knowledge, in which it would be the happiest circumstance imaginable, if the incumbent had had his share carved out for him in land; and he was sure, that were he to consult his memory, he could quote similar proofs, which would take up their Lordships till midnight to recite. He had frequent opportunities of knowing it himself; and in his neighbourhood, which had been an open country, but was now happily inclosed, (he would say happily for all the parties) instead of the parsons and farmers being perpetually quarrelling and going to law, all was harmony and good neighbourhood. The revenues of the church, in point of actual receipt, were considerably encreased, the landed property was much augmented in its annual value, and the farmers grew rich. He had himself, he was free to confess, profited considerably as a land-owner, and was anxious to extend

tend those benefits to other parts of the kingdom, though he had no prospect of being a partaker, or to reap the least advantage; nor could he help repeating, that he saw no inducement there could be to obstruct inclosure bills, unless it were from a wish to breed discontent, and create animosity between those who, from every motive of common interest and natural connexion, were bound to each other by the strongest ties.

His Lordship animadverted upon several facts stated by the learned prelate who made the motion of recommitment, observing, that the facts so stated remained to be proved, and if they had been proved, by no means warranted the conclusions which the learned prelate had thought fit to draw from them. On the whole, being a real friend to the principle of inclosing, and seeing nothing in the present bill which took it out of that general rule or principle, he would vote for receiving the report immediately, and of course give his negative to the learned prelate's motion for recommitting the bill.

The Bishop of *Llandaff* (Dr. Barrington) rose after Lord Sandwich. He said, that if the whole of that day's debate had been confined within the limits of the original question of recommitting the Ilmington inclosure bill, he should be very incompetent to deliver his opinion on its merits. He had been but a few days in town, and had never seen the bill till he came into the House. The light, however, thrown upon it by the learned Lord on the woolfack, the uncommon ability with which he had gone through each distinct clause, the various unanswerable objections he had urged with a force of argument peculiar to himself, had left no doubt in his mind what opinion he should give.

With regard to the incidental matter which had been blended with the proper consideration of the day, he should be ready to meet it in its full extent, whenever a time should be fixed for its discussion. It was a question which involved in it a variety of the most important points which could possibly affect the whole of a most useful and respectable body of men, the parochial clergy; and which therefore should not be decided but upon the most mature reflection. He would, however, so far enter into the proposition opened by the right reverend prelate who spoke first, as to declare his concurrence in the general doctrine laid down by his Lordship. He meant not to tread over again the same ground, he should only press an argument which the right reverend prelate had left untouched,

touched, and which continued to strike his mind, after nine years view of it, with its original force. One consequence, he said, of commuting tythe for land, was subjecting the clergy to all the burthens of landed property. Some of those burthens had not yet been felt; they would ultimately, he feared, be destructive; but he begged their Lordships to consider what must be the situation of a clergyman, whose all depended upon the land allotted by the inclosure? The immediate advantages derived from an increase of income, were more than compensated by the heaviest future inconveniences, which, as they were remote, were unfortunately neither foreseen nor attended to. Taken on either supposition of the incumbent's occupying the land himself, or letting it to a tenant, the event must, in process of time, prove equally fatal to the church. Ill cultivated, impoverished, and exhausted ground, desolated fences, dilapidated barns, an insolvent landlord, and an undone tenant, must leave the successor without relief, and without remedy, to bemoan, in fruitless wishes, the ill-judged exchange. With respect to the present constitutional provision of tythes, he was free to acknowledge, that it was attended with occasional difficulties, though these difficulties had, in his opinion, been considerably over-rated, both as to their magnitude and frequency. The clamour raised from the few incumbents who received their tythe in kind, was studiously propagated, while the silent meritorious moderation of the many who benefited their parishioners by an inadequate composition, remained either unknown, or studiously suppressed. The question had hitherto been argued only on the idea that there was no third mode. Should, however, the legislature determine, contrary both to his sentiments and his wishes, to annihilate tythe in future bills of inclosure, he would just hint then, as a matter deserving their Lordships future consideration, the substituting a corn rent on the principle of the well known act of Queen Elizabeth, which regulates the payment of reserved rents in collegiate leases. There were two assertions, he said, which had been rather unguardedly advanced by the noble Earl who spoke last, which, but for the liberal professions of regard to the clergy, and zeal for their interests, he should have suspected to have proceeded from an enemy, rather than a friend, which he could not permit to pass unnoticed, or allow the House to be adjourned, and the numerous attendance at the bar dismissed, unreplicated to. The noble Earl had asserted, that the parochial clergy of this country

country were amply provided for. The only answer he should make, was stating a single fact, from which, uncom- mented upon by him, he should leave their Lordships to draw their own inference. The livings which did not ex- ceed 50l. a year would not receive their complete augmen- tation in less than three centuries: The second assertion of the noble Earl contained a charge of a heavy nature indeed, no less than that of a premediated design to encroach on the rights of the laity. From whence did the noble Earl collect his evidence of this design? Did the learned Lord on the woolstack frame, or was he only a subordinate agent in this hardy project? how came the right reverend Prelate, who espoused the same side of the question with the noble Earl, to have opposed this beneficial plan? The learned prelate con- cluded with observing, that the clergy of this kingdom felt and acknowledged the blessings of an establishment fixed and ascertained by law. Incorporated with the laity, connected in one common interest, citizens of the state, holding their pro- perty by the same laws, they must be mad indeed could they for an instant forget the obligations they owed to a lay legislature, or entertain a thought of engaging in a combat which must terminate in their inevitable ruin.

The *Bishop of Peterborough* rose a second time, in order to answer something which fell from the noble Lord on the woolstack. He said, he always paid a proper deference to what fell from the learned and noble Lord; but he hoped his Lordship would excuse him from taking any thing as proved, merely on the authority of a name, for however high his opinion of any man's abilities might be, or exalted his cha- racter, as long as he had the honour to sit in that House he should think it his duty to deliver his sentiments freely upon any question submitted to his consideration. And, regardless of whom he might have the misfortune to differ with, he was much more anxious to act right, agreeably to his own judgement, than run the risque of acting wrong in direct contradiction to it.

His right reverend friend, the learned Prelate, who had opened the debate, had opposed the present bill principally on account of the allotment carved out by it for the rector in lieu of tythes. To that point he chiefly spoke when he first rose, and he must declare, that he heard nothing from the learned and noble Lord sufficient to induce him to change his mind, or become a convert to the learned Lord's opinions;

consequently, he would give his negative to the motion made by the learned Prelate for sending the bill a second time to a committee.

Viscount
Stormont.

Viscount *Stormont* said, he had been so perfectly convinced by the arguments urged by the noble and learned Lord on the woolsack, that he felt himself bound to vote for the re-commitment. He did not at the same time commit himself so far as to oppose the principle of allotments in land, and commutations indiscriminately, and in all given circumstances and situations; nor on the other hand, to prefer tythes in the same manner. He believed either principle rigidly adhered to would be productive of great inconvenience, if not oppression and injustice; but in the case before him, putting the principle out of the question, the noble and learned Lord had, in his apprehension, stated so many solid objections to the enacting clauses of the bill, that, be its fate what it might hereafter, he thought it improper to pass it in its present form. He should not attempt to trouble their Lordships upon a subject which had been already so fully and ably discussed; much less would he go into a detail, respecting the impropriety of several clauses, the same having been so clearly pointed out by the noble and learned Lord. But under the impressions the learned Lord had made upon his mind, he was perfectly convinced, that the bill ought to be sent back to the committee, in order to be amended.

Duke of
Richmond.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, however disagreeable it might be to him to differ with the noble and learned Lord upon a subject of this kind, he must say, in every single point of view he considered it, he highly approved of the bill, and would of course vote for its being passed into a law. He confirmed, so far as came within his knowledge, which he said had been pretty extensive, the inexpediency of taking tythes in kind, and the numerous law suits, disagreements, and bad blood, it occasioned between the incumbent and his parishioners. In those parishes where tythes were taken in kind, it bred perpetual animosity and dispute; and even as to the point of emolument he solemnly protested, that he believed upon an average, the clergyman would be much better off by making a reasonable composition, by which his parishioners would even be considerable gainers, than by collecting his tythes in kind.

If the question was merely this, shall the tythe be taken in kind, and shall it amount to a fair tenth of what the produce would be, if there was a compensation in land or money?

In

In that case, no composition however favourable to the clergyman would be an equivalent. But when the means those, who were to pay the tythe in kind took to make the Parson's part of as little value to him as possible, the number of hands, carts, &c. necessary to the collecting the tenths, the uncertainty of the weather, but above all, the discouragement it gave to cultivation, and the methods resorted to by the farmers, to forbear that species of husbandry which was best calculated to produce the most valuable tythe crop; he sincerely believed, that the incumbent did not receive in kind, after all deductions, any thing like what the same land would produce if it had been tythe free.

So far as to the principle of the bill,—which as well as he was able to judge, seemed to be totally out of the question. The learned Lord had indeed confessed as much, for he complained that the principle had been dragged into the debate, and pressed into the service of those who argued against the re-commitment, merely to puzzle, confound, and mislead those, who, approving of the enclosing the lands in question, might nevertheless wish to have the clauses amended. Here it was plain the noble and learned Lord had forgot himself, and even overlooked the grounds on which the motion was maintained by the learned Piclate who made it; that was, that enclosures in general were injurious to the clergy, that they were injurious in other instances, and that the circumstances under which they could prove serviceable, were too very few, although they might be productive of great evil, no solid advantage could result from them. The noble and learned Lord held nearly the same language, and by treating the accounts of parish disputes between the flock and pastor, as mere fanciful notions, which had no real existence; or if they had, ought not to be weighed against the policy and justice of taking tythe in kind, combated as far as in his power the principle of commutation either in land or money.

Yet when the noble Lord has fully debated the principle of the bill, what does his Lordship next do? He tells your Lordships, that the principle is totally beside the question, that all your Lordships have to do is to examine the clauses. His Lordship then proceeds, and in a very long and learned discourse, points out the numerous defects, absurdities, incongruities, and great injustice, those clauses are fraught with. To this he had only to answer, that the noble and learned Lord has urged his objections too late; for, as the principle should have been debated before the bill

was sent to a committee, so the clauses should have been discussed in the committee. The committee he understood was a very respectable one, and the noble Lord who generally presides in committees in the House [Scarfsdale] presided upstairs in that on the present bill, so that nothing was wanting to give the proceedings all due weight. If indeed any extraneous matter or any thing contradicting the principle of the bill had been introduced into it in the committee, that would be a good ground for re-committing it; but as no such thing had been pretended, he thought it was now too late to re-model the clauses. He had another objection to part of the noble Lord's speech, which contained a kind of history of the slovenly manner private bills were wont to be conducted through another House. It was in his opinion, very improper to make use of a general argument against a private bill, unless it particularly applied, and the particular application were pointed out. It was no less improper to state instances of neglect, which did not relate to that House, upon a bill then under consideration in that House; and no less so to infer, that every bill was smuggled through the House, to the injury if not ruin of individuals, because one or two instances had come to his hearing by personal communications made to him by the parties themselves.

After several other arguments equally pointed and strong, he gave it as his clear opinion, that the principle as well as enacting clauses of the bill, having received the sanction of the House in its respective stages, he saw no ground for the motion made by the learned Prelate, expressing at the same time his extreme willingness to enter into a full discussion of the reasons, facts, and arguments, urged by the learned and noble Lord, whenever his Lordship should think fit to submit them to the consideration of the House; and if on inquiry, the mode of conducting private bills through that House should be found defective, or liable to abuse; he pledged himself, he should be one of the first who would co-operate with the learned and noble Lord in removing the evil, and in drawing up such resolutions, to be framed into standing orders, as would prevent the existence or return of such evils in times to come.

Lord Scarfsdale.

Lord Scarfsdale said, he had the honour of presiding in the committee, and declared he had seen nothing in the present bill which distinguished it from those numerous bills of the same kind, which passed every session, since he had the honour of a seat in that House. The committee was well at-

tended,

tended, some objections had been stated by the learned prelate who opened the debate, and one or two other noble Lords; but they were over-ruled, and in his opinion very properly so; upon the whole, he retained the same sentiments now that he did in the committee, and would vote in the affirmative for the third reading, and of course against the re-commitment.

Earl Temple said, he found himself much embarrassed when he was obliged to dissent from the noble and learned Lord, but as far as his experience had enabled him to form a judgment, he was not at liberty to vote for the recommitment. In answer to some of the general objections stated the mode of conducting inclosure bills in the other House, he must confess, as long as he sat in that House, nothing of the kind stated by the noble and learned Lord ever reached his knowledge; yet he had frequent opportunities of knowing, having the honour to represent a very respectable county [Bucks.] which necessarily drew upon him a considerable deal of attendance, which was generally esteemed part of the peculiar duty of county members.

It had been well observed by a noble Duke, who spoke lately, that the proper place to modify clauses, or to maintain objections against them, was in the committee. It certainly was, but supposing for argument sake, which was not the fact, that the bill had been hurried through there, and the clauses not properly examined, he could not see with what degree of propriety the right reverend prelate who opened the debate, or the noble and learned Lord who supported him, could mix an argument on the principle of the bill, with the objections to the clauses, or apply general abuses, which were presumed to exist in the mode of conducting private bills through both Houses, to a particular bill to which, in his apprehension, no such objection lay.

The noble and learned Lord's particular arguments, however ably and plausibly urged, being all founded upon the double mistake, that the principle of the bill was now before the House, and that a presumed general abuse was a reason against a bill, when no such abuse was proved to exist, he should hold himself excused from making any additional observations, the question having been already so fully and minutely discussed, were it not, that having stated the charge, he looked upon himself bound to state likewise the grounds of it. The noble and learned Lord says, that a seventh or eighth (for he declares his ignorance whether it is a seventh or

or eight) part, which is allotted to the rector, is not an equitable, fair composition, in lieu of the tythes to which he is at present entitled. What was this but directly controverting the principle of the bill, for if for thirty years past it has been an established rule followed in the framing of inclosure bills, to carve out such a share as a fair and equitable equivalent in lieu of tythes, it must follow clearly, that it was not the clauses merely, but the principle of allotment that the learned Lord had been combating. The same argument held good with respect to the other clauses, such as the nomination of the commissioners, the mode of carrying the act into execution, the equivalent to be given to the Lord of the Manor, and the dividing the soil afterwards among the freeholders.

His Lordship proceeded to make several observations upon what had fallen from the noble and learned Lord, respecting the clauses, and endeavoured to shew that his Lordship had mistated or misconceived almost every one of them.

He declared his entire approbation of the remark made by the noble Duke, that it would be extremely improper to recommit the present bill, though the mode of apportioning out the rights of the parties concerned, had been as faulty as the learned Lord had described; first, because the objections had not been urged in time, but more particularly, because the parties concerned in the lamington inclosure came exactly on the same footing, and with an equal claim as those who had applied to the legislature for the last thirty years; if for no other reason but that alone, he should be for passing the bill in its present form; because the rejecting of it would not only be a disappointment to those who wished to have it enacted into a law, but they would be put or led to a very considerable expence, under the faith of Parliament, and precluded the advantages they expected to derive from it by an *ex post facto* regulation.

If such allotments or compensations were found to be inadequate, if the church should thereby, if they were to continue, to be despoiled of its patrimony, if incumbents were to be ruined through their inability to cultivate, or by the lands being over-valued or thrown upon their hands; if peace and harmony were not to be promoted, nor the doctrines or person of the clergyman rendered more respectable and amiable; these were all considerations truly deserving their Lordships most anxious attention and inquiry. No person who heard him was readier to co-operate than he was in searching for truth, and probing it to the bottom; but until their Lordships were convinced of the necessity of going into such an investigation,

investigation, and of the probable benefits which would result from it; till their Lordships so-persuaded shall have finally come to a determination, to put a stop to such commutations and equivalents; he trusted, that it would be very difficult to produce one sound reason to take the present bill out of the general rule, unless it could be proved that the provisions of it materially or essentially differed from bills of the same nature, and directed to the same objects.

He did not rely merely upon speculation for the arguments he had presumed to trouble their Lordships with; he had formed his judgment from experience gained out of Parliament as well as within it; he meant in the country and in his own neighbourhood, where there had been vast tracts of land, common fields, wastes, commonable lands, &c. inclosed; and he could affirm, upon his honour, that during the seven years he acted as a magistrate within the county in which he resided, and he was enabled to say, that his attendance at the quarter-sessions was pretty constant and uniform, his memory did not enable him to recollect that in the whole course of his attendance a single appeal had been brought before the quarter-sessions, complaining of any partiality or injustice in setting out or allotting the several portions by the commissioners nominated by the several acts, which proved so far as this circumstance could be supposed to apply, that the powers vested in the commissioners had been such as were approved of by the parties concerned, and that those powers had been faithfully carried into execution. Such being his general ideas, as well on the general principle of commuting tythes for compensations or compositions in land or money, as the particular provisions of the bill now before their Lordships, he found himself under a necessity of giving an hearty negative to the motion made by the right reverend prelate.

The *Lord Chancellor* rose a second time, and declared, that *The Lord Chancellor* he waited with anxious expectation of hearing something in reply to the objections he had presumed to state early in the evening, but he was sorry to say he had heard nothing which could lead to a conviction in his own mind that he had either misconceived the object of the bill, or had used any arguments in his speech but what were fairly suggested by the provisions it contained. He was far, as had been hinted by a learned prelate who spoke early, [Peterborough] from assuming to himself any superior abilities, or as laying any claim to infallibility. He was too sensible of the vanity of such pretensions in any man, and much more so in himself, who wished

wished rather to pursue an humble line, suited to his very humble talents and habits of life. But disagreeable as it was to be taxed with arrogance and presumption, he could much more willingly submit to such a charge, because it could amount to no more than a proof of his folly or ill-founded claims, than to have his intentions arraigned, and strongly arraigned, as wishing to disseminate discord and animosity, for aught he knew, from one end of the kingdom to the other; he confessed that he owed more to himself and to their Lordship's than to let such an accusation as that go forth into the world without endeavouring to exculpate himself from what he should ever deem to be not only a very serious, but in his apprehension, a most odious and criminal charge; so odious and criminal as to render him unworthy of a seat in that House, or among any assembly of gentlemen whatever.

He assured their Lordships, that any insinuation of the kind must have created very uneasy sensations in his mind, but when the charge was made directly, it filled him with very great astonishment. He had examined his argument over and over again, he had endeavoured to refresh his memory, he had laboured to recollect any careless expression or phrase which might have fallen from him in the hurry of debate, and which might give a reasonable colour to the censure passed upon him by a noble Earl who spoke some time since, [supposed to mean Lord Sandwich] but all to no purpose? and if any expression had dropped from him sufficient to warrant the noble Lord's animadversion, he could only plead ignorance or forgetfulness, for hitherto his attempts to recollect them had been in vain.

The words used by the noble Earl were, "that those who endeavoured to send the bill again to a committee," or words to that effect, "wished to disturb the peace and quiet of the country." He hoped, that he had given no just cause for imputing to him so wicked, base, and scandalous a motive, if he had ministered no just cause for such a charge, direct or implied, he made no doubt but their Lordship's would acquit him of any such intention, and consider this method of defeating an adversary, to mean no more than those ornamental flowers which men of great abilities, from the warmth and exuberance of their imaginations are apt to mingle in the most grave and serious discourses upon the most important subjects; men, who operated upon the strong impulse of unbounded genius, and a rapid conception, suffer themselves to be hurried away by the *tenens dicendi copia*, and thereby transgress in the bounds

rigid truth and justice. He prayed, whenever he had the misfortune to differ with persons of such distinguished he might add unmanageable, talents, to sacrifice the love of eloquence, or at least set limits to it, and not to throw a stigma upon him, which if really founded in truth, would represent him as a monster and not a man, who though not so highly gifted, would not yield to that noble Lord, nor he trusted to any other noble Lord, in the pride of endeavouring to the best of his poor abilities, to a faithful, honest, and conscientious discharge of his duty.

After his Lordship had pretty fully given vent to his feelings, he proceeded to answer such parts of the noble Earl's speech as he conceived bore the least relation to what he offered in support of the learned Prelate's motion when he first rose. He said the task though a necessary one was rather difficult, the noble Earl having dressed his arguments in such meretricious colours, surrounded with so many blandishments, and accompanied with such allurements; they might be said to have been so trimmed and decked out with false ornaments that the question lay buried or hid under them.

His Lordship then replied to the several arguments which had been urged in reply to what had fallen from the learned Prelate who opened the debate and himself, very much at length; in particular, he reprehended the noble Earl to whom he had been alluding, for the indecency of saying, that if the facts stated by the learned Prelate who made the motion were true, that they amounted to a general calumny upon the people of England; this was an unusual expression for one member of that House to use to another. The noble Earl had given an history of inclosing in his own neighbourhood, and of the great advantages which he derived from it in the improvement of his estate. If in argument he should presume, that the noble Earl had exerted all his influence and weight in that county or neighbourhood in which he resided, to procure those bills to be passed through both Houses, without having attended to the interests of the tenants, with that dignity of character, that generosity of mind, and with that disregard to any object but that of increasing the rent-roll of others, of enriching the farmer, and rendering the clergyman easy, comfortable, and respectable, in respect of property and the good will and affection of his parishioners; such an insinuation might bear a much nearer relation to calumny than any thing which had been stated by the learned Prelate who made the motion: So much for the morality of the question; as to the religion of it, he made no hesitation to give implicit credit to the noble Earl's assertion, that he would be ready

to lay down his life in defence of the constitutional rights and privileges of the Church; but no such sacrifice was requisite in the present instance, the religion of his country was clearly out of the present question, which was neither more or less than whether the property which the constitution had allotted for the support of the clergy, should undergo a total alteration, contrary to what had been customary for nearly a thousand years. The noble Earl's argument went that length, or did not at all apply; consequently he was at a loss to collect his Lordship's meaning, unless thinking that commutations in land or money were preferable to tythes, he was willing to risque his life in endeavouring to better the condition of the clergy.

The House was at this time extremely disorderly, so that we could not distinctly hear that part of his speech which was intended as a reply to the Duke of Richmond and Lord Temple, but it seemed to turn upon this, that the re-commitment of bills was as regular a proceeding as committing them; consequently, be the principle or provisions of the bill what they might, the motion rested solely on the merits, whether or not the objections taken to the latter, were such as were worthy of farther enquiry and investigation in the committee, where they had not been at first fully considered.

The Earl of *Sandwich* declared, he was a considerable time at a loss to know what person the noble and learned Lord had been alluding to, and so ignorant was he that he had made use of any such expression as he at length understood was imputed to him, that he asked several persons near him whether he made use of it? if he had, he was ready to beg the learned Lord's pardon, for most certainly he never intended to give his Lordship the most distant cause of offence. He made no doubt that this declaration would be accepted of as a full apology for any unguarded words he might in the warmth of debate have inadvertently let slip; as he could with truth assure his Lordship, there was not a person living, for whose character and abilities he entertained an higher reverence and respect; and so far from throwing out any insinuation of a tendency such as the learned Lord had conceived, that he would appeal to his Lordship's candour, if he did not say, "if the noble Lord was fully acquainted with the subject, he was persuaded his humanity would induce him not to oppose the bill?"

As to the powers of persuasion and eloquence which the learned Lord supposed him to possess, his Lordship well knew he neither possessed or laid claim to them. His talents were

were unhappily much circumscribed, and as to oratory he never affected it. The most he aimed at was to make himself informed of his subject, and to convey his sentiments in a plain unadorned stile, such as to make what he said intelligible to his hearers. There were others of superior talents, and who affected other modes of expression. He envied no man the talents he possessed, having long learned the folly and absurdity of pretending to be what a man is not.

As to the question before the House, he had heard nothing but what rather strengthened him in his former opinion, having had frequent opportunities of knowing that commutations in land, in inclosure bills, were much preferable to taking the tythes in kind for all the parties, and he would suggest one additional reason, which did not strike him when last up; that if a clause for commuting land for tythes, or some other mode of commutation had not been introduced into inclosure bills, no such bills, so far as they respected cultivated grounds would have taken place, nor that spirit of improved cultivation and the reclaiming poor or barren ground would have ever prevailed, and of course we should never have those extensive inclosures, which are visible in almost every county in England, and which add at once to the extensive beauty of the country, to the increase of the aggregate produce of the lands of the whole kingdom, and to the very great benefit of numerous individuals.

The Earl of *Radnor* confirmed the arguments used by several noble lords who spoke in favour of the bill, and against ^{Earl of Rad-} ^{nor.} the motion of recommitment, from his own experience. He said at the same time, he had not come to any pre-judgment on the principle, in the very large and extensive manner in which it had been argued; he was not therefore prepared to enter into that part of the question. The only point which seemed to him to be before the House was this, and merely this; did the present bill differ materially from the inclosure bills, which are customarily passed every session? If it did not, he saw no good ground for sending it again to a committee; if it did, most certainly it ought to be re-committed, and in that case, such deviation might be a sufficient reason for totally rejecting it; not having heard any alteration pointed out which took it out of the common rule, till he should, he must be against the motion made by the learned Prelate.

Earl of Suffolk.

The Earl of *Suffolk* was of opinion, that the present bill came before their Lordship under the faith of Parliament, and so far as the bill was supported by precedent and justice, it was intitled to their Lordship's countenance and support, but no farther. The noble Lord on the woolfack had, in his opinion, stated several strong objections, such, as if well founded, would prove the bill to be not warranted, either in precedent or justice; in that point of view he must confess he was for sending the bill again to a committee. If those objections could not be maintained no harm could be done; the bill would of course be reported and pass into a law, if they should appear to carry sufficient weight with them, the bill would very properly be rejected. He did not mean to bind himself by any thing he now said, as to the principle of the bill, but merely threw out his own sentiments as they arose upon the state of the argument on both sides.

Bishop of Chester.

The Bishop of *Chester* rose, he said, to express his satisfaction that the question had assumed a very different shape from that in which it seemed to enter the House. He observed, that he had been given to understand, that the great general question concerning the expediency of commuting tythe for land, in the case of inclosures, would be that day debated, and, perhaps, decided; and the manner in which the debate was opened had confirmed him in this idea. Under these impressions he had, he confessed, no small degree of anxiety upon his mind, as a matter of such extent and importance, could not, he conceived, be properly considered and discussed on so short a notice, and with so little preparation as the occasion allowed. But he was extremely glad to find that his apprehensions were ill-founded; and that the abstract question of commutation was only an incidental part of the debate, the decision of which would not at all depend on the fate of the bill then before the House. The noble and learned Lord on the woolfack had with his usual ability thrown such light on the subject, and made so clear a distinction between the two questions, as had given great ease as well as information to his mind, and had had left him under no doubt what part he should take. The objections stated by the noble and learned Lord to the bill under consideration, were, in his apprehension, so strong and unanswerable, that they would entirely decide his vote that night for the recommitment of the bill. But his Lordship said, he begged to be understood as acting thus solely on the grounds of these particular

particular objections to the clauses of the bill, and not with an intention to give any decided opinion against the commutation of tythe for land in the case of inclosures. This was a point of so very wide an extent, and so complicated a nature, that he had not yet been able to form any positive judgment upon it. As far as he could see his way, he was at present rather inclined to think, that there might be cases in which the exchange of tythe for land might be a desirable thing for the incumbent. In the case of enclosing common and waste land, it seemed to be allowed, that circumstances might exist, which would render it necessary to exonerate the inclosure from tythe, by some substitution or other. And he thought also, that there were other cases where it might be equally proper. In livings, for instance, which consisted almost intirely of common-field lands; if these happened to be inclosed, and no land was given the incumbent in exchange for his tythes, he might be a very great sufferer, and his benefice might be reduced perhaps one half: for whilst the lands were open they could not be converted into grass, they must necessarily continue always in tillage. But when they were inclosed, they might be, and frequently were, converted into meadow or pasture, the tythes of which their Lordships well knew were much less valuable than those of grain. Here therefore he thought an allotment of land should be allowed instead of tythe. But whether this should in all cases be allowed, he was by no means prepared to say. He thought that there were many inquiries to be made, and a variety of facts to be ascertained, both with respect to the proprietors of land and the clergy, before the general abstract question of commuting tythe for land could be properly determined. He was therefore very glad to hear that the consideration of this great point was to be put off to a distant day, when he doubted not but it would be examined with that attention, and discussed with that deliberation, which a question of such great magnitude and importance required.

The Bishop of *Landaff* rose again, and offered a few words ^{Bishop of} in explanation, but said he was well pleased to learn by what ^{Landaff.} fell from the learned Prelate, was not at all to be understood as if the present question was to conclude the sense of the House upon the general principle of preferring commutations in land or money to tythes in kind, because he came totally unprepared to speak to it, as making that obligatory by law which was considered at present as arising from agreements founded on various local circumstances.

Earl

Earl Bathurst.

Earl Bathurst (Lord President of the Council) said, he would vote for the present motion, because it did not affect the principle of commutation; but he begged at the same time to add, that he preferred an equivalent in land, money, or corn, according to the peculiar circumstances to tythes in kind. He had sat eighteen years in the other House, and eight years on the woolstack, during which time many cases had come before him in another place and at the bar of that House, which fully convinced him, that inclosures and commutations in land were equally calculated for the benefit of the patron, the clergyman, and the parishioners. How far it might be proper to modify the principle, he would not pretend to say, but unequal as he might be to the task, if no other noble Lord should think fit to take it up, he meant to submit some propositions to their Lordships on the subject at an early day.

At nine o'clock the question was put, on the motion made by the Bishop of St. David's, and the House divided; contents for the re-commitment, 23; not contents, 31.

The motion being thus rejected the report was received; the bill read a third time, and passed. Adjourned to Monday.

April 2.

Earl Bathurst.

As soon as the private business was over, Earl Bathurst rose and observed, that a question had started up in the course of the debate on the Ilmington inclosure bill, on Friday, of very great and singular importance; a question, he begged leave to say, which in a greater or less degree, affected every foot of land within this part of the united kingdom; the matter he alluded to was, the debate upon the general principle respecting the policy and expediency of making commutations in land, &c. for tythes in kind. Much, he observed, had been urged for and against the principle, though properly speaking, the question was not *sub judice*, or before the House; yet, several noble Lords having gone so far into the discussion of that question, and entertained sentiments so diametrically opposite on the subject, he thought, that it would be very proper to bring it before the House unmixed with any extraneous matter. Having intimated something of a similar intention, when he had the honour of last addressing their Lordships, he thought himself, as well on account of that intimation, as from the mere necessity of establishing some general rule for proceeding in the framing and passing inclosure bills in future, called

called upon to submit some propositions to their Lordships, which might tend to draw forth a decided opinion on the subject.

When the sense of their Lordships opinion should be collected on that point, he had it in contemplation to throw out some other hints, which he trusted might appear not totally unworthy of their Lordships farther consideration. Upon the general ideas therefore, he would now move, that their Lordships be summoned for Thursday next, for the purpose of appointing a day to take his intended propositions into consideration.

The House adjourned to Wednesday.

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April 4.

As soon as the private business was over, Lord *Loughborough* Lord Loughborough. gave notice on account of Lord Bathurst's absence, and his necessary attendance in another place, that it was the noble Earl's wish to have the order of summons which stood for to-morrow, (Thursday,) deferred till the next day. His Lordship then moved that this House be summoned for Friday next.

The *Lord Chancellor* The Lord Chancellor. observed, that it would be more regular to discharge the first order previous to moving the second, and then move it, *de novo*, to whatever day the noble and learned Lord might think most convenient.—In consequence of which,

Lord *Loughborough* moved, that the former order be discharged, and the House be summoned for Friday next. Lord Loughborough.

April 5.

Private business, no debate.

April 6.

Prayers being over, counsel were called to the bar to be farther heard in the adjourned cause of Wednesday and Thursday last, being an appeal from a decree of the court of session in Scotland, in which the Rev. D. Johnstone and others were appellants; and Mr. Chalmers and others respondents. It was relative to the tythe of fish, landed within the port of North Leith. The court below determined that fish were not tytheable upon importation, on a presumption that tythe was paid where they were caught.

The

*Lord
Chancellor.*

The *Lord Chancellor* rose, made a very long speech, and drew a line between the contending parties by moving, that such part of the interlocutors complained of, as went to take off the tythe or duty paid upon fish imported for home consumption, be reversed, and that such part of the fish as was imported for the purpose of re-exportation be taken off or drawn back; which was agreed to.

*Earl
Bathurst.*

As soon as the order of the day was read for their Lordships to be summoned, *Earl Bathurst* [Lord President of the Council] rose, and said, he should not have presumed to have troubled the House to be summoned for that day, were he not desirous of calling their attention to a subject of very singular importance. In the debate which had taken place on the preceding Friday, he observed, a right reverend Prelate [Bishop of St. David's] whose candour could only be equalled by his abilities, stated a question that merited the most serious consideration of the House, viz. whether the authorising of commutation of land for tythes in an inclosure bill, was or was not a measure beneficial to the clergy, and whether it would be consistent with justice and sound policy to continue this system of commutation or an equivalent in land in lieu of tythes, which the learned Prelate observed was but of modern invention, and had been only introduced since inclosure bills had become so very frequent. This question their Lordships in general he doubted not, would perceive to be a question of great magnitude, and to involve in it consequences of the deepest and most interesting kind. Another right reverend Prelate [Bishop of Peterborough] who spoke second in the debate had declared himself of a contrary opinion; and contended that tythes in kind might be well commuted for land or money, agreeably to existing circumstances, and and opposed reasonings of considerable force to the arguments of his learned brother; surely then their Lordships would agree with him, that the question if upon no other account, deserved their utmost attention. Several other noble Lords avowed similar sentiments to those avowed by the two learned Prelates. The question so far as it was before the House, &c. could be fairly considered, underwent a very full and detailed discussion, and the result of what passed on that occasion was yet recent in their Lordships recollection. It terminated in favour of an equivalent in land by the opinion of a very decisive majority. In the course of the debate, it was true, many things foreign to the point, but immediately connected with the bill then under consideration, had arisen, and the whole of the debate had taken so different a turn, that

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sight was lost of the noble Prelate's question altogether, and the arguments of the day were brought to a conclusion upon very different grounds; it was in order therefore to bring their Lordships back to the discussion of that question that he had taken the liberty of moving to have their Lordships summoned. The mode, that with the leave of the House he would pursue, should be to move for a committee of the whole House on Wednesday next, if agreeable to their Lordships, to take the subject into consideration.

In that committee he meant to offer a set of propositions in the form of resolutions, the tendency of which he would open to the House. The first resolution was in purport, "that it is the opinion of this House, that inclosures of commons, waste lands, forests, and open fields, are highly beneficial to the kingdom." His Lordship went into a history of inclosing commons, waste lands, &c. shewing, that in the reign of Henry VIII. and of his successor Elizabeth, there was a prevailing idea that they were detrimental, and a variety of statutes were made to forbid them. In the reign of James II. however, men began to change their opinions, and the question assumed a new face. Since that period, the advantage of inclosing commons, waste lands, and open fields, had become gradually more and more obvious, and so fully had prevailed with the legislature, that within the last thirty or forty years, nearly nine hundred inclosure bills had passed both Houses of Parliament, and received the royal assent. He farther said, that he had particularly inserted the word forest in his proposition, because he was convinced that great good would accrue if more of the forests of England were cleared and inclosed; and in this part of his speech he paid some handsome compliments to a noble Marquis, a member of that House, [Rockingham] for the pains he had taken in getting two different bills passed for the inclosing forests. Concluding, that inclosure bills in genera manifestly tended to the benefit of agriculture, tillage, and husbandry; to the employment of the industrious; to the decrease of the poor's-rates; and to the general wealth of the kingdom.

This he begged leave to assure their Lordships was not an assertion founded in theory or speculation, or from even local experience, or particular or peculiar circumstances, but was supported by so general a stream of evidence that he could venture to appeal to every noble Lord who heard him; but who might differ with him as to the point of eventual policy

expediency, whether they had not in their respective neighbourhoods been eye-witnesses of the great benefits derived from inclosure bills.

He next proceeded to state his second resolution, the substance of which was, "that it is the opinion of this House, that commuting of tythes in certain cases of inclosure, where it can be done with justice, for an adequate compensation of corn or land, is a measure equally beneficial to the clergy and the landholder, and ought to be encouraged by the legislature." This proposition, he said, was meant to have a retrospective as well as a prospective view; for, as so much property had been already affected under this species of tenure, it would operate in a two-fold manner: it would tend to quiet the minds of those who already held possessions under the faith of Parliament, no matter whether clergy or laity, and encourage the proprietors of lands not divided, to apply to Parliament in time to come. He quoted a part of Speed's Chronicle, in which a conversation is related, and declared to have passed between William the Conqueror and a certain rich Abbot. William, tracing the usage up to the most remote and ancient times, and maintaining it upon several historical proofs particularly stated. Among others, William put it as a question to the Abbot, how it happened that he conquered the whole kingdom by a single battle, when the Danes had fought so many, and were not able to effect a conquest? the Abbot replied, that when William landed, the kingdom was in a very different state and condition from that in which it stood when the Danes invaded it, and made their efforts to subdue it, the churches having swallowed up so much of the possessions and wealth of the kingdom, that it was the interest of the subject to prefer a religious life; this operated as so strong an inducement, that great numbers went into the monasteries, priories, and other ecclesiastical institutions, and sought the preferments to which the religious were alone eligible, that there were not martial men enough remaining to make up an army sufficiently powerful to repel an invader or guard the kingdom. William, as Speed states, profited by this answer, and in order to enable himself to collect forces enough to avert the danger of invasion, and preserve the kingdom from all attacks of a foreign foe, as well as to maintain peace and good government internally, proceeded to strip the religious, and particularly the Abbot he had questioned, of a considerable part of their possessions, and to abolish and curtail such of the religious institutions as were least useful.

His Lordship next proceeded to shew that till the Reformation the clergy taxed themselves, and the means by which that mode was altered, he believed, few of their Lordships were particularly acquainted with. The change was effected in this manner, not by an act of Parliament, a resolution of either House, nor even by any royal proclamation, but solely owed its origin to a written agreement, the record of which he had seen; it was signed by no other persons but the Lord Chancellor and the Archbishop of Canterbury, early after the Restoration, who were, in fact, the only contracting parties to the agreement by which the parliament, the clergy, and the nation had bound themselves by a tacit consent or silent acquiescence. The tenor of the agreement was, that the clergy should give up the right of taxing themselves, provided they were allowed to vote for members of parliament, and by that means have a share in electing the representatives of the people, who were entrusted with the power of taxing the kingdom at large. Under the authority of this agreement, he said, the clergy had for so many years paid taxes equally with every other description of his Majesty's subjects.

His Lordship's third proposition was in substance, "that it might be expedient to give a compensation in land, money, or corn, where tythes were already usually taken in kind, or where no composition existed." This, he observed, would only operate in cases where the parties interested were equally well inclined to come to such agreement, and would of course be entirely optional, and calculated merely to pave the way, to procure a good understanding between the pastor and his flock, which he trusted would promote the mutual interest of both, and a friendly correspondence between them.

His last proposition, he said, would be introductory to a bill. It had been objected by the learned Prelate who made the motion on Friday, to commutations in land, that the clergyman, thus transformed into a land-owner, would be subjected to many inconveniencies, if not liable to great losses, that those who already had accepted of commutations in land were seduced in the first instance by the lord of the manor, or some considerable land-holder, by an immediate advantage, to agree to accept of an increased revenue; that in some instances the rent agreed for was badly paid; in others, that those agreements originated in collusion; the clergyman in possession, being secured an increase of his annual income during his life or incumbency, in prejudice to his successor, who, coming to stand in his shoes, would find himself necessarily obliged to make a choice of some one or other of the following in-

conveniencies. He would, if that were the case, be obliged to agree to the rent accepted of by his predecessor, or if the bargain was a collusive one, he would be obliged to take whatever rent might be offered, perhaps not more than two thirds or half of what had been agreed to be given for the rector or vicar's part, before the inclosure bill was passed into a law: or lastly, he would be necessitated to take it into his own hands, without any ability to cultivate or draw from it any benefit whatever. The fences might be levelled or broken down; the barns or other erections gone to ruin; and instances might happen, said the learned Prelate, similar to one which had come to his knowledge, where the clergyman had been presented and inducted, but sooner than accept of what would have proved to him rather a disadvantage than profit, the living and the duties annexed to the actual possession of it had been abandoned; in consequence of which, the portion of land set out for the clergyman had lain neglected and disowned, and divine service had been discontinued within the particular parish allude to. The learned Prelate had not confined himself to a particular instance on Friday, but argued the point as applying to the probable grievance resulting from leases for the term of twenty-one years, which had been authorised in all inclosing bills passed of late years, by a special clause, in which as he had just observed, delapidations, pretended compositions, insolvent tenants, &c. would be among the leading evils whereby the successor would be left without relief and without remedy. These certainly were considerations worthy the serious attention of their Lordships, and he could not but confess himself much indebted to the right reverend Prelate for suggesting them. In order however to guard as much as the nature of the case would permit, against these evils, he proposed to prepare a bill that would operate as a preventative; but as the matter he was perfectly aware, required great nicety and great caution, his idea was to bring in such a bill as he had mentioned, and proceed with it so far as to have it printed, and then let it remain on the table till the next session, that every one of their Lordships might have full time to digest his thoughts upon it; to place it in every point of view; and to be able, when the subject should be resumed in the next session of Parliament, to speak his opinion upon it decidedly, and without reserve. With regard to the resolutions which he had stated to their Lordships, his intention was, if the House (when in a committee, and when the topics the resolutions turned on, respectively, had been properly weighed and

and discussed) should agree with him, that the resolutions were founded on facts, and were wise, politic, and expedient, to move that that those resolutions be voted; but he should not think of bringing in the report to the House till after the holidays, that their Lordships might have time to prepare for their reconsideration.

Before he sat down, he would just say a word or two in answer to an objection that had been taken to the mode of commuting tythes for land, by the right reverend Prelate to whom, in the course of his speech, he had so often alluded. The learned Prelate stated, that the practice of commuting tythes for land tended to bring land into mortmain, and as land in mortmain was much more inconvenient in a commercial country than tythes in mortmain, the right reverend Prelate observed, that the practice having obviously such a tendency, was one reason among many why our ancestors thought tythes the best and properest maintenance for ecclesiastical persons. Men, it was his duty to observe, were very apt to catch at particular words and phrases that had been used to create a strong impression, and had at one time or other been popular from their signifying something which might or might not have been the source of great advantage to the kingdom. Mortmain was a phrase of this description, the true import of which he would explain to the House: his Lordship then gave an account of its etymology, and shewed the nature of its application. The term he declared was first used, as applicable to those lands which were so held, as to bear out the sense of the phrase of their being in main-mort (in a dead hand) because the holders of them were not obliged to send out knights to join in the military service of the kingdom; and at that time of day, lands in general were held by no other tenure than those of suit and service; but would any man say, that lands were held by the same tenure now? certainly they were not; and therefore the whole of the argument about mortmain fell to the ground: and the reason was this, as lands held in mortmain were free from every species of feudal service, while that service continued, when a tax upon land was instituted in its stead, and the clergy by their representatives in parliament began to tax themselves, the objections against that species of tenure from that moment ceased to exist, with the cause which gave it birth.

His Lordship, in the course of his speech, took notice of various other matters that had occurred in Fridays's debate, and which were applicable to the question he wished the House to go into a committee upon. He particularly advert-
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ed to what had fallen from another learned Prelate [Bishop of Landaff] who spoke on a former occasion, relative to a substitution of corn-rent in lieu of tythes, should the House determine to annihilate them in future bills of inclosure; and said, that consideration, and an infinity of others would naturally suggest themselves, and would become the proper topics of discussion, when the house were in a committee as he had proposed. He also begged their Lordships to take notice, that he had not drawn up his second resolution in such terms as to make it extend to an universal abolition of tythes upon inclosures, but merely in certain cases, where a compensation could with justice be made to the minister; and and he particularly wished, that the House would not once entertain a thought, that his ideas loosely and generally as he had thrown them out, were founded on the most distant intention to abridge the parochial clergy of their natural rights; on the contrary, he flattered himself that both clergy and laity would be materially benefited should the propositions he had suggested be adopted, for nothing could be more contrary to his wishes than to prejudice the church and the ministers of it; and he thought once more necessary to make himself understood on the subject, which was not pointed exclusively to compensations in land, even in inclosure bills, much less in any other, but was to be varied according to local and other circumstances. The learned Prelate who first moved in this business, had stated an instance where a corn-rent had been substituted for a compensation in land, at the express desire of a most reverend Prelate some time deceased, [the late Archbishop of York]. He turned to the record, and found the fact to have been faithfully and correctly stated, and the provisions of the bill ably and accurately drawn up; but whether the compensation or equivalent was given in land or money, or in corn rent, would be in his opinion of very little consequence, provided it was a fair and equitable one, calculated to defeat the possible or probable abuses pointed out by the learned Prelate; namely, the preventing any injustice being done to the incumbents for the time being; the defeating or diminishing the estate his successor would be otherwise intitled to; or the stripping the church of her just rights and constitutional patrimony.

He would just beg leave to add a single observation before he sat down, which was, his motion for leave to bring in a bill had this object and this only, that of the framing the skeleton of a bill after the holidays, which he meant should go no farther for the present session; but, by being printed, their

their Lordships would have the whole recess to examine the principle, and fully revolve the subject in their minds; so that early in the next winter they would be fully enabled to give a decided opinion upon its policy or inexpediency. With this intention only he had presumed to trouble their Lordships upon a subject of such vast importance; and upon this view of it, he trusted to their Lordships candour, if the subject should be deemed at all worthy of future discussion or deliberation, he was intitled to some degree of favourable attention.

He begged their Lordships pardon for troubling them so long; thanked them for their unmerited indulgence; and concluded with moving his first proposition.

The Bishop of *Landaff*, after paying several handsome compliments to the abilities and candour of the noble Earl who spoke last, and testifying the full conviction which imprinted itself on his mind, of the purity of his Lordship's motives, proceeded to describe the vast magnitude of the question when combined with its various relations, and probable if not certain consequences; and farther observing, that the propositions hung out by the noble Earl would, in his opinion, lead to matters no less novel than dangerous, that of modelling the whole system of tythe-laws, as they had now remained for ages; an intended innovation, in his apprehension, of the most alarming nature; a proposition which would not merely operate upon a particular subject or species of property, but which would extend itself to the whole tytheable property of the kingdom.

The noble Earl's first proposition was, he apprehended, founded in error in point of fact as well as in theory. The noble Earl laid it down as a kind of truism, or proposition, in its terms commanding universal assent as soon as made known; "that it would be of general benefit and utility to enclose forests, wastes, common and commonable lands," &c. This was the first proposition the noble Earl proposed to assemble their Lordships to discuss and vote on Wednesday next. He thought it his duty to dissent from, and deny the universality of that proposition, and at the same time, and in this stage of the business, to add his reasons.

He endeavoured to inform himself upon the subject, and had learned, that the principle of enclosing all lands, within the description stated, admitted of many particular if not general exceptions. In corn grounds it had been proved, independent of the great waste of land and expence of enclosing,

closing, that enclosures were unfavourable to agriculture, and to the cultivation or produce of corn. The crops were subject to blights and mildews, from the shade of the neighbouring trees and hedges which obstructed the passage of the air, while it excluded the sun, and of course threw a shade which was extremely unfavourable to the ripening of the corn. Trees, hedges, and shrubs, were besides apt to generate vermin, and many other evils of a similar nature, which proved extremely destructive; whereas in open fields, the corn was free from those evils, and the farmer or grower always found it to be of a better and superior quality, and increased in quantity as well as in goodness. If this should prove to be the case, as he made no doubt it would, upon a full and mature enquiry, when called upon to vote an abstract question, directly contrary to what he believed to be true, he thought it best to communicate his sentiments thus early, rather than by giving his assent in this stage of the business, seem to approve of that which for the reasons now stated he previously meant to oppose.

His Lordship dwelt particularly upon the danger of shaking ancient foundations, and removing ancient land-marks, which had stood the test of ages, and which he believed could not be changed to any real advantage or benefit, but might in the end lead to injustice, or to the utter subversion of the ecclesiastical establishment of the kingdom, and of course, as forming a part, and a very considerable part, deeply affect and endanger the constitution itself. Besides the general argument, he appealed to every noble Lord who heard him, who had paid the least attention to agriculture or to the improvement of lands, whether there was any one mode of cultivation respecting arable or grass lands which could be applied with success to every kind of soil, to every species of property, or every modification of right. He was persuaded himself of the contrary; they differed intrinsically and extrinsically. In some instances local prejudices would prevail, custom would govern in others, and temper and disposition in many more. What would be of infinite benefit in one place would prove mischievous in another; and what would be accepted of with infinite satisfaction by the inhabitants in one parish would perhaps be execrated in a neighbouring one, and cause those animosities and incurable disagreements between the pastor and his flock which it was the profest intention of the present resolutions to remove; and consequently

ly instead of promoting peace and union between the clergyman and his congregation, they would, if agreed to, create endless contests, litigations, and disputes.

He was perfectly convinced of the noble Earl's commendable zeal, and if he was as certain of the practicability of carrying his general plan, of an equitable and fair compensation into execution, as he was of the motives which gave birth to it, he should be much readier to become a convert to his Lordship's arguments; but he had very strong reasons to doubt, that acts would be resorted to which would entirely defeat his Lordship's good intentions, and there was an instance stated by his right reverend friend, who moved for the committee on Friday [Bishop of St. David's] which he must consider as true in all its parts, because he had not heard it controverted or disputed, he meant that of the portion carved out by the incumbent, being abandoned by his successor, and divine service in consequence thereof discontinued. He was satisfied of the abilities and zeal of the noble Earl, but still he was fearful of experiment, and that art, chicane, and fraud, in the various shapes it might assume, would triumph over the best intentions, aided by the best abilities, when by a collusive agreement between the incumbent for the time being, or by the arts and management of the lord of the manor, the freeholders, and other parishioners, the eventual interest of the next incumbent might be materially injured or nearly annihilated; when at the same time, it would, in his opinion, be morally impossible to create any power of a superintending or controuling nature adequate to prevent the injustice or abuse in its origin, or remove or correct it after it had been perpetrated or permitted.

After urging several other arguments against the first proposition, he animadverted upon each of the following ones, in the course of which he made many pointed animadversions, equally tending to demonstrate the positive evils which must arise upon adopting the principle of commutation in general, and the inadequacy of any mode of prevention which might be adopted, sufficient to defeat or correct the evils which must naturally result from a system which would hold out temptations too strong to be resisted, and means of gratifying them he feared, beyond the power of legal detection.

He should be sorry to obtrude his opinions on their Lordships, while there were so many noble persons so much more able and fitter for the task; but he declared he could not in conscience remain silent, nor abstain, convinced as he was,

of the solidity of his objections, from imparting them to the House. He thought it his duty to declare once more before he sat down, that he trembled for the consequences of coming to an hasty or precipitate vote upon a matter of such singular consequence; and concluded with reminding the noble Earl, that though the resolutions should be voted, they would still require the sanction of an act of Parliament to give them operation. He wished besides to remind the learned and noble Lord, that although a bill or bills agreeably to the resolutions proposed by his Lordship to be voted on Wednesday next, should pass that House, before the same could be passed into a law, they must obtain the assent of the other branch of the legislature. Upon the whole, taking into consideration the vast extent of the question, the great variety of objects which it embraced, the advanced period of the session, the thin attendances which usually happen after the Easter recess, he would recommend to the noble Earl, to postpone the farther consideration of the proposed business till next session; otherwise, for the reasons he had presumed to urge, he should find himself obliged to give a negative to the motion, for the House resolving itself into a committee, for the purpose of taking into consideration the resolutions proposed to be submitted to that committee on Wednesday next.

*The Lord
Chancellor*

The Lord Chancellor, as usual upon such occasions, quitted the woolsack and came to his place at the head of the Dukes' bench. He began with observing, that as a member of that House, he stood in a very disagreeable predicament, and was much embarrassed; because, before he could with propriety enter into the consideration of the question, he found it necessary to remove some general impressions, and comment upon some circumstances which he believed had been misapprehended or mistated by those who thought fit to differ from him on a former day.

He had been described as a person actuated by childish motives, and acting under silly and absurd prejudices; that, full of zeal for the interests of the church, he had missed his way in the plainest road; and nourished ideas so contrary, wild, idle, and absurd, that while his wish and professions were avowedly to maintain the rights of the clergy on their true basis, he was so blinded and rivetted to his own childish opinions, that what he wished to obtain as an advocate, he defeated by the folly and absurdity of the mode, stile, and manner, he adopted in the pursuit of it. When persons of great rank, and still greater abilities; when persons who

had

had filled the most important offices in the state; and whose private virtues, great talents, and approved experience, adopted such a language, he confessed he felt much on the occasion; because with the load of folly that was imputed to him, and perhaps very justly, another species of accusation was implied for which he could plead no apology; namely, an incurable obstinacy, originating in inveterate prejudices, and a froward resistance to the just and indisputable claims of so much public and private virtue! yet, however weak and childish his conduct had appeared to those who thought it worth their while to so represent it, it formed no part of the present question. The charge as a general one, might be well founded; but although he was ready to submit to the great authority he alluded to, it was his duty to observe how far the general censure was aptly and justly applied in the instance which gave birth to the observation.

It was said he was full of zeal for the church. He was so; but his zeal was not partial, or confined to the church, farther than it was connected with the other great national establishments, of which it formed a part, and no inconsiderable one. There were many things, perhaps, in which he would not go as great lengths as some persons might; there were others, in which perhaps he would go farther. He did not mean however to assume any peculiar merit to himself, merely on account of that circumstance. He did not mean to insinuate, that because he differed in opinion from both parties, that therefore he was right. The middle path which he had struck out to himself, was taken from choice, not, he trusted, from any premeditated prejudices; and whether he was or was not mistaken, he could fairly say, that he had not been influenced by the opinions of others; what he thought on the subject proceeded merely from the suggestions of his own mind, assisted by that degree of attention which his other avocations and duties permitted him to give it, and what had struck him as just, wise, equitable, and expedient. For instance, some of their Lordships might think that a compensation in lieu of tythes ought not be given or accepted of in any given case; and others, that it would be proper to give or accept of a compensation in every given case; opinions widely opposite to each other. He was, for his part, equally averse to both extremes. He could frame in his own mind an infinite variety of cases, in which the claims of the patron, rector, or vicar, might be fairly, equitably, and he would add bene-

specially for both parties, be commuted for compensations in land, money, or a corn-rent; and on the other hand, perhaps, as many in which such a commutation would be every way inexpedient, inequitable, inadequate, and unjust. Nay, he would venture a step farther than what in argument had been yet suggested on either side of the House. He could conceive peculiar circumstances in respect of property, which being so blended together, and the interest as well as soil so intermixed, as to render it perfectly justifiable and expedient, to divide and set out the common fields, &c. among the land-owners, without any reference whatever to the claims of the lay-impropriator, patron, rector, or vicar, he meant as to the mode of carrying the same into execution.

After laying before their Lordships this genuine state of his mind, he trusted he should be intitled, upon an avowal so serious and solemn, that whatever his zeal or his childish zeal for the church might be, it would be acknowledged, it was not merely a blind zeal, nor totally destitute of method and principle, be the former however absurd or the latter however erroneous. He flattered himself that even his warmest antagonists upon cooler reflection would confess, that although a better method might be easily struck out, that his at least aimed at system and uniformity, and though a better and sounder principle might be established, yet nothing could be fairly objected to it, on the ground of prejudice or partiality; because, if for no other reason, it would some times tend to operate for commutations, and at other against them, sometimes in favour of what had been imputed to him as the effect of mere zeal; at other times equally inimical to that cause, which it was insinuated he had blindly embraced, and blindly as well as obstinately adhered to.

It was urged, and perhaps with great justice, that the propositions, hung out by the noble Earl, were only objects of general discussion, and proposed to be matter of future re-consideration. For his part, however true that might appear to the noble mover, he could not see them in the same light. It struck him that they were precipitate, as had been well observed by the learned Prelate who spoke last. Their Lordships were called upon—to do what? to vote the resolutions first, and consider them afterwards. For his part, he had been so ill informed, and so silly to continue to think he had been rightly informed, that anxious enquiry, close and serious attention, and mature deliberation, ought to precede a fixed determination whether to adopt or reject; but, in the present instance, that stale maxim was meant

to be exploded, and exactly the reverse proposed to be substituted in its stead. If he might be presumed to have an interest or wish either way, he could with truth say, he had never heard a single syllable or intimation of their contents, being totally ignorant of their tendency, nay even of their existence at all, before he heard them from the noble Earl; yet he was not ashamed to confess, that they were in their nature so extensive, various, and complex, that not only at the instant he was speaking, but at the period proposed to bring them forward, he neither was, nor could be ready to give a decided and satisfactory opinion on their contents. That, to be sure, might be his fault, not that of the noble Earl. His talents might be of a size and texture unequal to the task. He might require time, great labour, and industry, to comprehend and judge of what in itself was simple and almost self-evident. He might be dull, slow of comprehension, and every way unprepared to decide upon a subject, in which men of sounder abilities, of more genius, and greater penetration, would find themselves free and unembarrassed. The noble Earl who presided at the head of his Majesty's councils, with so much credit to himself, and so happily for the nation, as well as some other noble Lords, were very probably fully informed, and their minds every way prepared to come to a vote. Why so? because, by their superior talents they had made themselves perfectly master of the subject, and learned as much by a very short and transient attention to it as would call for much labour and industry from others. Be that as it may, as a member of that House, and destitute of those gifts which others possessed, he had a right to contend for a more full and ample consideration, otherwise he would find himself obliged to come to a vote upon a subject in which he was not prepared to give one; while those, possessing the abilities he had been describing, not seeing the necessity of a more laborious discussion, would be perfectly at their ease, and from the sudden conviction pressing on their own minds, would forbear to make those allowances which men of dull apprehension, of tardy or imperfect conceptions, were in candour entitled to; but which men of a contrary description, not feeling any such defect in themselves, were often too apt to refuse.

After paying his compliments very handsomely to the noble Earl [Sandwich] whom he presumed to have represented him as a child, (we believe without doors) and to the noble Earl, whom he represented as presiding at the head of his Majesty's councils with so much credit to himself, and so happily

happily for the nation, [supposed to mean Earl Bathurst]; and after having endeavoured to describe himself as not quite so childish, obstinate, and partial, as had been so industriously propagated somewhere, his Lordship proceeded to take a nearer view of the question.

He believed, he said, that it had been a general rule, as well in matters of policy as legislation, as he had already taken the liberty to observe, to consider things fully and maturely previous to their ultimate adoption; and when they were finally determined upon and digested, to lose no time in carrying them into execution. He believed every noble Lord who heard him would subscribe to the soundness of this principle as a general one. He was, however, unfortunate enough to think, that the conduct of the noble Earl, in the present instance, was directly the reverse, and evidently subversive of that principle. Their Lordships were now, he would not say for the first time, but he hoped for the last, called upon to decide first, and consider afterwards. They were called upon to vote a string of abstract propositions, which might apply to any case, or to no case; and when their Lordships had resolved them, they were left to hunt for particular occasions of making a fit application of them. In his poor understanding, the more rational and regular mode of proceeding would be to wait till the occasion occurred, and then apply the principle to the particular case, not as it were to create the particular case, merely to exercise the principle.

He was, he must confess, an enemy to innovations in general, particularly innovations brought forward as the present were, because he presumed he had been so foolish to consider customs and usages sanctioned by the approbation of ages, too sacred to be suddenly, he would not say wantonly changed, upon an idea of reformation, or of making things better, which it was fair to affirm were well enough. It was the maxim of a celebrated politician, whose character was sufficiently known to every noble Lord who heard him, [supposed to mean Machiavel] to endeavour to bring the constitution back to its first principles, and place it on its ancient foundations, in order to restore it to its primitive purity; which, from the general course of human events, and the never-failing mutability which they generate, it had imperceptibly departed from. This it was which had frequently induced him to endeavour to shew the impropriety of making experiments upon mere theory, in order to render things better

better which appeared at the time not to want mending; first, because experiments in respect of great national objects were in themselves dangerous: secondly, because the evil or mischief should be first pointed out, even to create a pretence for innovating. Such a conduct was in his apprehension the very reverse of the prevailing opinion among modern statesmen; their endeavours seemed to direct the other way, not to an adherence or a wish to recur to first principles, but to deviate still farther from the original constitution, [supposed to allude to the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Burke, and some others]. No man could see to what the present proposed resolutions pointed, or where they might end. He had often expressed himself very fully on the subject of innovation and experimental state of reformation in that House, and had as often been supported and fortified in his arguments and opinions by a very able assistant, [Lord Bathurst] whose support he knew he must want that day. The payment of tythes had existed for many ages; it had been handed down to us from the earliest periods of the constitution. Tythes had been universally rendered to the clergy, as their patrimony, by all Europe. They had existed under the Saxon government, and were acknowledged by internal consent, he believed long before even they had received the sanction of the legislature. The payment of tythes stood therefore upon the most ancient and stable foundations: tythes had been established by custom time immemorial, and had an authority as high, respectable, and venerable as the constitution itself.

His Lordship, after fixing the high antiquity of the ecclesiastical constitution of this country, proceeded to state some of the obvious inconveniencies which might result from the introduction of change and innovation. He observed, that in political contemplation the ecclesiastical polity had been at all times considered as one of the pillars of the constitution. He had no occasion, he presumed, to refer to particulars. History afforded strong and undeniable proofs, at a period not very far distant, how dangerous it was to attempt to alter or innovate. The religious establishment was attacked; and the attack proving successful, that pillar of the constitution having given way, it shook the rest, and nearly overturned the constitution itself, and that in such a manner as to render its re-establishment extremely difficult.

For his part, he was averse to experiments of any kind, unless upon full and mature consideration. He had been
long

long enough in the world to be a witness to several attempts of the kind; and if he might safely conclude or judge from the consequences, he saw nothing sufficient to induce him to make farther trials of a similar nature. The present age, he observed, was fruitful in schemes; every person who thought of one making no scruple of bringing it forward under the name of an improvement; but whenever they were or should be offered to his consideration, either as a member of the legislature or a statesman, he should always act with great caution and much doubt; and that because whatever came so powerfully recommended to him as to have received the approbation of the ablest men in the most enlightened times, ought not, in his opinion, be changed, till after the fullest consideration, or upon motives of the most manifest and urgent necessity.

The noble Earl's second proposition, which more particularly applied to the principle his Lordship seemed desirous to establish, was so framed as to recommend to their Lordships to come to a vote upon a question merely abstract. It was a deduction drawn from his first, which was not even attempted to be proved; and it recommended to give a compensation in lieu of tythes in certain instances;—certain, here, evidently referred to something which was to be the result of previous investigation and enquiry; and therefore, in his apprehension, would amount to a declaration on the part of their Lordships, that something was fit to be done, of which no previous definition was pretended to be given. In certain cases, or in certain circumstances, some case or circumstance ought to be stated or defined, in which it would be proper to act in such or such a manner. Before the case happened, or presented itself to their Lordships, it would be absurd to say what would, or could be fit to do; when it should or might happen, therefore, was, in his opinion, full time enough to determine whether it was a right or wrong measure.

The noble Earl said, that the principle, as he explained it, had been fully sanctioned and acknowledged upon a former occasion; he meant the principle of commutation, of giving land in lieu of tythes. He was unwilling to refer to what passed in a former debate, and much more so to call any determination of their Lordships into question or review: but, under this reservation, he deemed himself at liberty to oblige upon what had passed the last day. The bill for enclosing

closing the lands therein stated, most certainly met with their Lordships concurrence; but he never understood that the principle, as now brought forward by the noble Earl, had, or indeed, was properly at all under contemplation.

He begged their Lordships to reflect, notwithstanding what had been urged by the noble and learned Lord, respecting what passed the last day concerning the determination of the House upon the motion of recommitment made by a learned prelate, that although their Lordships might think a particular principle proper to be adopted respecting a particular private bill, it by no means followed, that the same principle, merely on the ground of prudence, was fit to be laid down in all cases as a general one, or to be adhered to in all cases that might occur; and though it might not be decent in him to controvert the propriety of that decision, or censure the conduct of the House on that occasion, he could never conceive that he was thereby precluded, or so far bound as to acquiesce under the extensive application of it, which the noble and learned Lord seemed desirous to make.

If he recollected right, that bill stood upon its own particular basis; an argument between the parties themselves, that on one side such a compensation was offered, and on the other that it was accepted of. When therefore he heard a rule laid down, which was to govern in all cases, and heard an instance adduced, in which that rule was thought applicable in a particular case, he confessed his total inability to discover how particular instances could be pleaded as an example on which to build a general rule. It might be perfectly right to commute upon some occasions; it might on others be equally improper; but if their Lordships agreed to vote the abstract question proposed by the noble Earl, their hands would be tied up in such a manner as to exclude all choice.

But if he disapproved of the matter, he no less disapproved of the manner in which the noble Lord had brought this question forward—just at the eve of a recess. He should think it improper perhaps at any time, much more now. But in what shape did it come recommended to their Lordships? In the first instance, as so many standing orders to be entered and recorded upon their Lordships Journals; and as to the bill, in the shape of a law. By the former, their Lordships were precluded from entering into the propriety or impropriety of any bill which came within the terms of

the standing orders; by the latter, their Lordships undertook to bind the other branch of the legislature in all possible cases. How decent or fit that might be, he should not pretend to determine; but this he was willing and ready to prove, that such a law, even in respect to their Lordships themselves would be idle and nugatory, as it declared in its principle not merely an act or law for the time, but was manifestly intended to bind their Lordships, as well as the other House, which so far as it was professedly meant to operate, amounted to a perpetual law.

His Lordship, after treating this subject in a most masterly manner, pointed out a great number of other inconveniences which might arise upon the general principle of the noble Earl's proposed resolutions. Among others he controverted the allotment or portion carved out or meant to be carved out for the rector, vicar, or lay impropriator. In many instances the eighth, he contended, was not a fair equivalent in land; and if the general commutation of land, instead of tythe, were to take place, he doubted much that he would have a very able and probably a decisive support in that House. If the reformation was to be general; if all tythe was to be commuted for land, or any other equivalent, he had good reason to believe that many who heard him, who were not adverse to the voting of an abstract question might probably adopt another mode and stile of thinking on the subject — and he would tell his reason. Though they might not feel that childish partiality and prejudice for the interests of the church that was imputed to him, they would possibly feel other sentiments which might immediately point out to them the necessary protection of their own property. Several of the noble Lords that heard him who were the proprietors of lay impropriations, if the commutation was to be a general one would soon learn that an eighth would neither be a fair nor equitable equivalent; they would perceive that what they were to receive would prove inadequate; consequently his fears for the clergy, if he had entertained any, would soon cease, being tolerably confident when their Lordships, he meant such as were lay impropriators, understood that their interests and properties would be affected as well as those of the clergy by this new plan of indiscriminate commutation, they he made no doubt would not be so unmindful of themselves as to neglect, upon every future occasion which might arise, to take every proper and necessary means in their power as members of the legislature, that the compensa-

tion they were to receive was an adequate one, and such as, without any diminution of the interest they were about to part with, might be deemed a safe and equitable equivalent.

From this remark his Lordship proceeded to state the compensation per acre in money, paid for the great tythes in Hartfordshire, Hampshire, and Wiltshire, in each of which counties, possessing property, he said, (if we recollected right in Hahts and Herts) he could, from his own knowledge, speak upon the subject. He contended from this, that if the resolution was adopted, the clergy would suffer considerably; and elucidated his assertion in the following manner: He supposed, that the native value of land was so much, that this land, in a state of cultivation, was worth so much more. He begged to elucidate what he meant to suppose, that it would let at ten or twenty shillings an acre, and when under corn it was worth ten times that sum; he would submit to their Lordships, whether a seventh or eighth of the land, or a rent equal to the seventh or eighth of the land, would be an adequate compensation to the patron, incumbent, or lay-impropriator; no, nor he believed a fifth, because tythe imported not a tenth, an eighth, or a seventh of the intrinsic value of the land, agreeably to the rent reserved, but a tenth of it when in a state of the highest cultivation and improvement. His Lordship stated an infinite number of other arguments, many of which bore exceedingly hard on the noble mover of the question. In particular he said, it was not very usual in one noble Lord to wrest a subject out of the hands of another, who had given notice, that he intended to bring the matter before their Lordships. A noble Earl had, as their Lordships would be pleased to recollect, given notice on Friday, that he meant to prepare some propositions, which, when he had properly matured, he had declared he should submit to their consideration; why then was another noble Lord, merely from feeling his own mind more ready, and his ideas quicker upon the subject, to forestall the noble Earl? Was it from a consciousness of greater wisdom, greater knowledge, or a rooted conviction that the ideas he had formed were the only good ideas that could be collected on the subject, and the only ones that were fit for their Lordships' countenance? By saying this, he begged not to be understood as meaning to insinuate that his Majesty's councils were not as wisely presided over as ever they had been at any time whatever; he only meant to observe, that there was no reason for their Lordships to be suddenly called on to decide upon

on a subject in five days time, which they were to be allowed a much longer time to think better of. His Lordship placed the question in many different points of view, and asked in what manner were the resolutions to be carried into execution? If as orders of the House, their Lordships undoubtedly were competent to make rules for the form of their own proceedings, in like manner as the courts below made rules for what were called the stile and practice of the court, but he did not conceive they were competent to make rules that were to bind the whole kingdom. At length his Lordship concluded with earnestly repeating his intreaty, that the House would not precipitately enter into a matter of so much importance.

Earl
Bathurst.

Earl *Bathurst* replied, and complained of having been greatly misunderstood by the noble and learned Lord. Nothing, he said, could be farther from his intention than precipitancy; he had all through his speech expressly declared as much. With regard to the argument, that it would be irregular for the committee to decide, and then for the House to reconsider upon the report, let their Lordships recollect, that it was the rule of proceeding in every bill brought into that House for the repeal of a law, by which the religion or commerce of the kingdom might be affected, or in respect to a proposition of any kind which would affect ancient establishments, or which seemed to be of peculiar consequence and importance; it was indeed the established mode of proceeding, because it would open a door to a fuller and freer discussion. Their Lordships would in that case be at liberty to weigh and examine the proposition in all its parts and different relations; to hear objections to former arguments; to point out how far they had been answered or removed: In short, it would be in a committee of the whole House only, where a subject of such great extent, and embracing such a variety of objects, as it had been frequently well described in the course of the debate, could be fairly and sufficiently discussed and examined; whereas, if a proposition in the shape of a bill were made, and it were permitted to be brought to a second reading, the order of their Lordships' proceedings would not admit of any member rising a second time, but to explain, and of course many opportunities to examine the principle as well as provisions of a bill, would be denied in a debate in the House, which a discussion in a committee amply afforded. As to the other point, respecting the presumed impropriety of reporting the bill the same day

day it was committed, that, he presumed to say, was perfectly regular; for if no amendment was made in a committee, a bill was reported the same day; but if an amendment was made, the bill was never reported till the next day, and then the House proceeded to reconsider it. He replied to several objections made by the noble and learned Lord who spoke last, hoping that their Lordships would not be misled, but would learn to make the just distinction between facts and assertions, misrepresentations and arguments, and laboured exertions of eloquence and sound reasoning, leading to a clear and indisputed conclusion.

He was sorry, but so it happened, that the learned Prelate who rose to answer him had totally misunderstood him, and in some particulars had misstated his arguments; and in this it was his fate to be peculiarly unfortunate, because he had taken uncommon pains to obviate the objections which he foresaw might be made to an hasty or premature decision, upon a subject every way so interesting and important. He begged leave to assure that noble Prelate, that it was never his wish or intention to precipitate the business, or press their Lordships to an hasty and sudden vote: he had, on the contrary, guarded his propositions with all possible caution; and, so far from proposing to hurry the bill through both Houses at so advanced a period of the session, that he had expressly stated, that his wish was to proceed with it to the stage of having it printed, and then to let it lie on the table till the next session. Before his Lordship concluded, he said, he cared not whether the committee was deferred to that day six weeks or that day six months, so far was he from wishing to precipitate the matter in point of time, that he was perfectly regardless what manner their Lordships might think fit to dispose of the motion for the present, still resolving within himself the fixed resolution of bringing the question forward at a more convenient opportunity.

The Bishop of *St. David's* said, in his opinion, the session was by much too far advanced to take the matter up at present. He must confess, he had heard nothing sufficient to obviate those objections he had made on a former day to the principle of commutation; or rather had collected from the noble Earl's own mouth, fresh arguments against the passing such a bill. At the same time, it was a respect due to the noble Earl, which no person would controvert, that the part he had acted claimed every possible degree of attention and respect. In that point of view, although he was

*Bishop of
St. David's*

not now disposed to vote for going into a committee on the noble and learned Lord's propositions; at a fitter time, and more convenient opportunity, he would cheerfully enter into the business; and, as far as his very slender abilities might enable him, would meet the question fairly, and decide in favour of that side which seemed to him to best promote general benefit, and to be best calculated at the same time to protect the respective rights, claims, and properties of the parties concerned.

Earl of
Coventry.

The Earl of *Coventry* said, he retained his opinion delivered the last day he had the honour to address their Lordships on the occasion, that commutation of tythes for land would be a measure of infinite benefit, and prove equally advantageous to the rector, lay-impropriator, the land-owner, and the farmer; nor had he heard a single objection stated that day, in the course of the debate, or upon the present occasion, of sufficient force or validity to alter it. Some objections respecting time and convenience had indeed been made that day, which might weigh against the noble Earl's motion for a committee on Wednesday next; but not one, that he had heard or attended to, which went against its principle and proposed objects. The time, he believed, was too short, as he understood the House would rise on that very day, or the next, for the Easter holidays. Many noble Lords who now attended would probably be out of town, and be engaged about their private affairs; he himself, perhaps, would be one of those. On that ground only he thought it would be better to postpone the consideration of the noble Earl's motion till after the recess, which would remove the only solid objection that appeared to him to be made to it. During the residence of noble Lords in the country, they might collect very material information; and as it was the professed intention of the noble Lord to abstain from pressing any bill to be passed into a law, a previous discussion of the subject, such as the noble Earl had announced, would fully prepare their Lordships to come to a final determination early the next winter, if it should be the sense of the House to entertain his Lordship's proposition. Here his Lordship applied to some noble Lord near him, to know to what day after the recess the House would probably be adjourned; after which, he said, if it should meet with their Lordships' approbation, he would move, that the noble Earl's motion, for the House resolving itself into a committee on Wednesday next be altered in the following manner, to Friday the 27th instant.

The

The Bishop of *Landaff* rose, and said a few words. He declared, that nothing was farther from his intention than endeavouring to misrepresent the meaning, or mis-state the words made use of by the noble Earl who made the motion; he never thought of applying the argument of hurry and precipitation to the bill meant to be introduced by the noble Lord. If he had so expressed himself, he assured his Lordship and the House, that he had not so intended. His particular objections were directed to the resolutions; which, if agreed to, were proposed to be framed into standing orders, which, in his opinion, would avail very little, if not adopted by the other House, for they would be only binding on their Lordships and not upon the other House. It was in that light merely he meant to state the objection, because the standing orders till sanctioned by the other House, would answer no one purpose whatever, and the time and attention which those propositions would take in both Houses, considering the very advanced period of the session, when they would be badly attended, fully, in his apprehension, supported the objections which the noble Earl imagined were made to his intended bill.

Bishop of
Landaff.

Some confusion, or rather a sudden conversation arose about the table, which could not be distinctly heard below the bar; the first thing which was heard, was from the woollack, which declared, "that this House do adjourn to Monday next."—Ordered,

The Duke of *Richmond* strongly objected to what he called this sudden and informal adjournment, which he contended was unprecedented. It was against all rule and order, he said, to adjourn the House in the midst of a debate, without any motion or notice whatever. There was a regular motion before the House, "that this House do resolve itself into a committee, &c. on Wednesday next." Until that motion was therefore disposed of, one way or another, either by a regular motion for adjournment, the previous question, or a direct negative, it was impossible to adjourn the House. The woollack could only put the question upon a motion regularly made; in the present instance no such motion had been made, and if it had, no question had been regularly put upon it; but the noble and learned Lord on the woollack had barely contented himself with putting the ordinary question of adjournment, as if no business whatever remained before the House undisposed of. Surely, it would be decent to wait for the noble Earl to abandon his motion before it it were thus set aside.

Duke of
Richmond.

The

Lord Chancellor.

The Lord *Chancellor* affirmed, that the motion of adjournment had been regularly moved by the learned Prelate, who spoke before the noble Duke, and that, as he understood, by the noble Earl who made the motion on which the House had been debating; arguing, that there was nothing irregular or contrary to the established mode of their Lordships' proceedings, it was sufficient to observe, that a motion of adjournment, or the order of the day, amounted to a full negative to any question at the time depending before the House.

Earl of Coventry.

The Earl of *Coventry* said, if a mere private suggestion was to amount to a motion, his public declaration was intitled to a preference. He had notified his intention as soon as the noble and learned Earl had concluded his reply, that if agreeable to his Lordship and the House, he would move that the motion be deferred till the first day after the recess, which would be the 27th instant, as he understood from some noble Lords near him, whom he had taken the liberty to inquire to what day it was supposed the House intended to adjourn. On this ground, and in respect of candour and regularity, unless the noble Earl himself chose to withdraw his motion, he thought himself intitled to move his motion in preference to any other which had been subsequently suggested.

Bishop of Landaff.

The Bishop of *Landaff* said, he had been authorized by the noble Earl who made the motion, to move the question of adjournment, and suggested such consent to the woolpack, which was what induced the noble and learned Lord to put the question as he had done.

Duke of Richmond.

The Duke of *Richmond* seemed by no means satisfied with this explanation. The consent of the noble Earl who made the motion, should have been notified by himself in a public manner. He was as capable of such a declaration as of making the motion, and supporting it in a very long and able speech; but allowing that the noble Earl's consent was as full and explicit as it had been described, such consent could in no way operate upon the established mode of conducting their Lordships' proceedings for taking it in either sense, that the noble Earl had consented to withdraw his motion, or that the learned Prelate, without any such previous consent, had suggested his intentions to the Chair in private, of moving an adjournment, yet neither the consent of the former, nor the suggestion of the latter, could authorise the woolpack to put the question in the sudden and unexpected manner he had put it; and in consequence of so doing, declaring the
sense

sense of the House to be, to adjourn till Monday next; one question should be disposed of before another was entertained, and the motion ought to be announced in such a manner, that the House might have it in their option to agree or dissent to it when they learned its purport, which he once more begged leave to repeat was not the case in the present instance.

The *Lord Chancellor* rose in great apparent warmth; he said, it was uncandid, if not indecent, to prevent any member from withdrawing his motions if he thought proper, and he was astonished, that the noble Duke should continue to persist in his objections, after the noble Earl had intimated his wish to a learned Prelate near him, in consequence of which the learned Prelate had conveyed to him such intimation. The motion put was a motion of adjournment, he had received it from the learned Prelate, and whether the noble Earl had or had not previously consented was of very little consequence, as the motion of adjournment was regularly made, and the question as regularly put upon it.

The Duke of *Richmond* said a few words in reply; he was glad to hear so liberal a principle laid down as that of permitting noble Lords to withdraw their motions whenever they thought proper. He had been a witness to several instances of a contrary nature; he could not charge his memory whether they arose since the noble Lord presided upon that woofsack, but he was certain there had been instances of a recent nature, where the mover had not been permitted to withdraw his motion. In future therefore, so far as the learned Lord's weight or influence might be supposed to extend, he was glad to hear that he should have so powerful an advocate to assist him in abolishing a custom, which in the learned Lord's opinion, was uncandid, if not indecent. But even though the general proposition had been strictly true, that it was uncandid and indecent to refuse any noble Lord to withdraw his motion, it did not apply in the particular case, for as yet, he had not heard from the noble Earl himself that he wished to withdraw it.

The question was then repeated from the woofsack, and the House adjourned till Monday.

April 9.

Private business. No debate.

April 10.

Private business. No debate.

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April

April 11.

Several public and private bills this day received the royal assent by commission, after which the House adjourned till Tuesday fortnight, the 1st of May.

May 1.

This day the House met, pursuant to their adjournment before the recess.

Prayers being over, the House proceeded to dispose of several orders which stood on the Journals, and to receive such reports from the Lords' committees as had not before been passed the committee.

The order which stood for this day, for hearing counsel at the bar in respect of the rights of the several noble claimants to the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, was discharged, and the same ordered to be heard on Monday next, the 7th instant, of which all parties were desired to take notice.

The other customary business being finished, a petition was presented at the bar in behalf of a criminal convicted, and ordered for execution by the Court of Justiciary in Scotland, for a street robbery within the city of Edinburgh.

The contents of the petition were substantially as follows: That the petitioner, James Bywater, late a sailor aboard his Majesty's armed ship the *Alfred*, lying at Leith, and then a prisoner in the Tollbooth of Edinburgh, was apprehended on a charge of stopping a person the evening of such a day, and robbing him of a silver watch, four shillings and his hat, for which the said Bywater was, after full proof, ordered for execution on such a day in the Grass-Market, the usual place of execution. It farther stated, that the law of Scotland ordains, that a copy of the pannel, or the persons ordered to be summoned to serve on the jury shall be delivered to the prisoner so many days before his trial, but that the copy of said pannel, delivered to the prisoner, was not the same as that actually summoned, by which means he was deprived of the right of challenge, which rendered the whole proceedings had against him irregular, informal, and illegal; and finally praying, that their Lordship's would interpose their judicial authority, and prevent him from suffering contrary to law and justice.

Earl of
Mansfield.

The Earl of *Mansfield*, as soon as the petition was read, rose and delivered a most able and learned speech. He said,
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he would confine what he meant to submit to their Lordships consideration within as narrow a compass as the nature of the subject would admit; and, as it was a matter of some importance, so far as it concerned the general system of criminal jurisprudence in the northern part of this kingdom, he intreated their Lordship's attention for a few minutes.

His Lordship observed, that real justice would not be defeated, though the petitioner should suffer contrary to those distinctions, which the laws of all civilized countries had very wisely established for the furtherance of protecting the innocent and for punishing the guilty; he meant, where a mistake, or wrong or false pleading might affect the former as well as the latter. The present case did not however come recommended to their Lordships upon any such ground; the objection taken by the appellant in the present instance, being only a trifling misnomer, which defect had been cured by the appellant himself by his subsequent conduct.

The appellant came to their Lordships for relief upon this ground, and upon this only; that of a mere literal error, not applicable to himself in any sense, or which might or could affect him as an innocent man. It would be necessary to state briefly how the law of Scotland stood, in order to enable their Lordships the better to decide upon the merits of the petition.

By the laws of Scotland, if a person is libelled or accused of an offence, the proof of which may draw after it a capital punishment, he is intitled to a copy of the names of the persons summoned to try him, as is the case of persons charged with acts of high treason in England; and it is likewise required, that said copy shall be delivered to him so many days previous to his trial. If the culprit, when put upon his trial, should object to or challenge any of his jurors, the law says, another person shall be sworn in the place of the person so objected to or challenged. In the case of the petitioner, it happened that in the list of the pannel who were to try him, the name of Lothian, one of the jurors, was wrong spelt on the back of the libel or indictment, and the prisoner took no notice of it at the time. The juror when called to the book, was announced, and answered by his proper name (Lothian) and so the court proceeded to trial.

After conviction, when the misnomer was first discovered, the objection was taken and the matter of law argued before the Court of Justiciary, but over-ruled. This was clearly a brief state of the petitioner's case, who had now appealed

to their Lordships, on supposition that the misnomer had proved fatal to the libel or indictment; but their Lordships would perceive, that although the objection had been much stronger, and the mistake more material, the prisoner had waved his right of challenge, by not exercising it at the time; consequently, though their Lordships were competent in their judicial capacity to entertain the appeal, it would not be fit to entertain it on the merits: but as he was of opinion that no such appellate jurisdiction was vested in that House, from the supreme criminal court in Scotland, nor of course from any inferior one, he would beg leave to state the reasons which induced him to be of that opinion.

The question in this point of view he took to be simply this:—Whether that House was authorized by law or usage to entertain and decide upon appeals from the decision of the criminal judicatures of Scotland?—This would lead him to the original right, as it might be now argued, if it had been for the first time the question had been started; the other, what the uniform conduct of that House had been in similar cases?

Their Lordships had frequently decided, and repeatedly determined, that they had no such appellate jurisdiction, as he should hereafter more fully explain, by reference to several instances in which such appeals had been dismissed; as to the other point, it would be proper to enquire into the state of the criminal jurisdiction in Scotland, antecedent to the act of union, passed in the year 1706; because whatever power of appeal was exercised by the Court of Parliament, or House of Lords in Scotland, previous to that period, was just as much, and no more, as their Lordships were now competent to exercise. In civil cases, the right of appeal to the House of Lords in Scotland, was he believed coeval with the constitution; in criminal cases, he took it to be exactly the reverse. When the Parliament of Scotland was abolished, or rather its representative, deliberative, legislative, and judicial power incorporated into that of Great-Britain, the right of appeal in civil cases devolved on the British Parliament; while on the other hand, the Scotch Peerage possessing no such right, the criminal judicatures of Scotland stood precisely after the Union as they had before. His Lordship here quoted a case or two in the reign of Charles II. of attempts being made by the Lords in Scotland to exercise such a jurisdiction over the criminal courts of the kingdom, but observed that those attempts had miscarried.

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After stating his opinions pretty much at large, upon this part of his subject, his Lordship proceeded to state such attempts as had been made by criminals convicted in Scotland to seek redress by appeal to that House.

The first which immediately came to his recollection, was founded upon the conviction of two persons for murder, and was indeed accompanied with circumstances of a most cruel and atrocious nature.

A lady of family and fortune [Ogilvie] had been instigated either by her own wicked inclinations, or persuaded by the seductive persuasions of her brother-in-law, or husband's brother [Lieutenant Patrick Ogilvie] in concert with him, actually perpetrated the horrid and unnatural murder her husband.

The fact being discovered, they were both tried, but being persons of rank and affluence, they procured very able counsel, and were defended with all the powers of ingenuity and learning; the charge, however, was so well made out, that they were both convicted, and sentenced to death; a fit punishment for so atrocious an offence! In bar of execution, the Lady pleaded pregnancy; which plea appearing to be well founded, she was respited till after delivery; in the interim, it was suggested by some of her friends, that by an appeal to that House, and the exertion of interest, she might obtain a pardon. The brother had before this been executed; never having thought of availing himself of such a salvo. The advice of the Scotch lawyers was taken by the lady's friends, and several of them gave their opinions, or rather dissertations on the subject, in which they displayed great theoretical ingenuity. Having assumed speculative premises that never existed, they built a variety of arguments upon them, deducing conclusions that were extremely flattering to the case of their client. In order to strengthen their application to the King, (for the House of Lords was not sitting at the time when the application for a reversal of the judgment of the court below was first made) these dissertations were lodged with his Majesty's secretaries of state, together with a petition, stating, that the prisoner wished to appeal to the House of Lords against the sentence of the Court of Justiciary of Edinburgh, and therefore prayed a reprieve till the House sat. The secretaries of state, from an extreme caution in a case of such nicety as a case of life and death, on this application sent down a reprieve, and before the House sat, the matter was a good deal agitated, and the law books and lawyers

lawyers of Scotland were consulted on the subject. He remembered the present Lord Justice Clerk was at that time Lord Advocate, and that he sent up as able, clear, and learned an opinion on the case, as ever was penned on any occasion; in that opinion, the Lord Advocate stated, that he had consulted the records of the Scotch Parliament, and submitted them to his brethren and the rest of the Judges of the Courts of Session, who had assisted him in examining every official document that was likely to throw a light upon the subject, without finding any one instance of an appeal in a criminal case. The Justice stated also that he had referred to an infinite number of law books, and had consulted the most learned of the profession, without being able to meet with one precedent for such an appeal as that attempted by the prisoner. When the Parliament met, the matter came forward, and it was upon discussion acknowledged on all hands, that the House was not a jurisdiction competent to receive such an appeal. The issue of the case was foreign to the point in consideration; but what he had stated was sufficient to mark the novelty of the application of 1768, the enquiries it gave rise to, and the result of those enquiries, which clearly shewed the sense of the Scotch bar, and of that House upon the subject at the time. The next case that occurred, was Duncan Campbell and the Earl of Eglington, in 1770. The grounds were, Campbell had shot the late Earl of Eglington, and the question was, whether there was any final appeal from the sentence of the Court of Justiciary or not? On this occasion the House acted conformably to their conduct on the former one. The case that followed this, was that of a member of Parliament, who was prosecuted on a charge of bribery, in the Court of Justiciary, in bar of which process he had pleaded privilege of Parliament, and upon the stay of proceedings the cause came before the House; but it was immediately seen, that privilege of Parliament was no plea to exempt the offender from prosecution for a crime, a member of Parliament being as amenable to the laws of his country on a criminal charge as a subject of any other description; the matter was sent back therefore to the Court of Justiciary, who were recommended to re-consider the nature of the prosecution. Another case mentioned by his Lordship, was that of the two sheep-stealers, in 1773, which was the last that had occurred, and had been referred to a committee and discussed a good deal, but the committee had expressly decided, that the House had no jurisdiction in cases of a criminal nature.

Exclusive of these cases, his Lordship added an infinite variety of arguments, grounded on facts, which he stated, to shew that the House was incompetent to entertain and decide upon appeals from the Court of Justiciary in Scotland. In particular, he stated a case that occurred in the year 1718, and which, for want of a proper distinction, and being rightly understood, had been thought by some to countenance the presumption that the House had the sort of jurisdiction now appealed to. At that time the magistrates of Elgin being inclined to shew favour to the clergy of the episcopalian profession, bestowed a chapel upon one of them, which chapel was claimed by the kirk, as belonging to it of right; and, in order to recover it, the kirk instituted a criminal prosecution; but the question upon which it was grounded, being altogether of a civil nature, viz. whether the chapel belonged to the kirk or to the magistrates? the trial was held before the Court of Session, and upon their interlocutors, the Court of Justiciary proceeded to adjudge, that the person possessing the chapel should deliver the key to the kirk; and pay a considerable fine. From the interlocutors of the Court of Session, the clergyman appealed to the House of Lords, and their Lordships reversed all that had been done by the courts in Scotland; but the order (which for the greater accuracy his Lordship said, he had referred to immediately previous to his rising to trouble the House on the subject) of their Lordships had been "to reverse the judgment of the Court of Session, and the proceedings had thereupon;" so that by the words, the proceedings had thereupon, it was clear the House did not think themselves warranted to interfere in a criminal case, but merely reversed the proceedings of the Court of Justiciary, because they were founded on the judgment of the Court of Session, which was a judgment on a civil question, and which they went back to in an especial manner. His Lordship also mentioned a case of an attainder of a young man who had been pardoned in this King's reign, but whose case was under consideration in 1754, when Lord Hardwicke was chancellor, and he was himself attorney-general, shewing that though the circumstances were of a peculiar nature, the House did not conceive itself competent to interfere. Among other arguments, he said, that where a power of jurisdiction was neither founded on the common nor on the statute law, it was to be looked for in usage, which in various instances made the law, but that on the present question, usage was uniformly against the argument,

argument, that the House had a jurisdiction in cases of criminal appeal, and therefore it was impossible that the pretence should be founded. He farther added, that if the House had such a jurisdiction, it would be attended with manifest inconvenience, because as the House was not always sitting, the jurisdiction would be sometimes dormant, and at such times the law might be compleated, and a convict executed before he had any power of lodging an appeal. For these, and a variety of other reasons, his Lordship moved, that the petition be rejected — which, upon the question put, was ordered accordingly. — Adjourned to Thursday.

May 3.

Private business. No debate.

May 4.

Private business. No debate.

May 5.

Private business. No debate. — Adjourned to Monday.

May 7.

Private business. No debate. — Order made, upon motion, that the order of the day for taking into consideration the respective claims of the persons to the office of Great Chamberlain of England, which stood for that day be discharged; and that the same be heard on Wednesday next, the 9th instant.

May 8.

Private business. No debate.

May 9.

The order of the day being read for hearing counsel in behalf of the several claimants to the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England; and it appearing that Lord Percy's (commonly called Earl Percy) claim, was founded in the most ancient pretensions, his Lordship's counsel, Messrs Kenyon, Howarth, and Scott, were desired to proceed in behalf of their client. Mr. Kenyon, as senior counsel, spoke first, of whose proceedings the following contains a brief abstract.

It was stated by him, that the office of Great Chamberlain of England was confirmed by King VIII. by patent, in the first year of his reign, to John the 13th Earl of Oxford and his heirs, who had been restored previously to his honours, dignities,

dignities, and estates, by act of parliament the first of Henry VII. and he accordingly exercised the office afterwards till his death; on the death of the said Earl it descended to his nephew and heir John the 14th Earl, an infant, the son of his brother Sir George de Vere, by hereditary right, as appears by a livery on the infant's coming of age in the 17th of Henry VIII. And the last mentioned Earl died seised of the same in the 18th of the same King.

It appears that the said last-mentioned Earl died without issue, and that John Nevill, afterward Lord Latymer, son of his sister Dorothy, Elizabeth his sister, wife of Sir Anthony Wingfield, knight, and Ursula his sister, wife of Edmund Knightley, esq. who was afterwards knighted, were his coheirs; to which John Nevill, Lord Latymer, the claimant Lord Percy his heir, being descended in a direct line from Catherine his eldest daughter, who married Henry, the 8th Earl of Northumberland, as appears by the pedigree annexed, the said John Lord Latymer having left no issue male: it therefore follows necessarily that Lord Percy is the heir of John the 14th Earl of Oxford, who died in 1526, seised of the office to him and his heirs, and is of course entitled to the same.

In 1625, 1 Charles I. on the death of Henry the 13th Earl, who died without issue, and who had exercised the office of Great Chamberlain of England, the honours and office were claimed by several persons, whose petitions were referred by the King to the House of Lords; and after many hearings thereupon, and the judges having delivered their unanimous opinion that the baronies were wholly in his Majesty's hand "to dispose at his own pleasure" (consequently in abeyance among the coheirs of John the 14th Earl of Oxford), and having also delivered their opinions on the other points of the case, the House thereupon offered unto his Majesty their opinion and advice, "That the title of the Earldom of Oxford might be declared by his Majesty to appertain to Robert de Vere, and that he might be accordingly established in that honour to him and to his heirs male; and that the said office of Great Chamberlain of England might be declared by his Majesty to appertain to the Lord Willoughby and his heirs, with a *salvo jure* to his Majesty." To these proceedings the petitioner's ancestor, the Earl of Northumberland, the heir general of the said John the 14th Earl, was not a party; he had been a close prisoner in the Tower from 1605 to 1621, and from that time to his death, in 1632,

lived in the country in retirement; having never appeared but once in the House of Lords during that period, which was on the 1st of December, 1621.

The opinion of the Lords in 1625, that the office might be declared by his Majesty to belong to the Lord Willoughby of Eresby, as heir general to Henry Earl of Oxford, is a decisive proof that the office was considered to be descendible to heirs general: and if Lord Percy can prove, which he clearly can, that he is the heir general of John the 14th Earl of Oxford, no plea of length and possession can be opposed to his claim; for it can, it is presumed, be very satisfactorily shewn, that a claim to this office of dignity cannot be affected by the statute of limitations.

Since the reign of Henry I. only two instances have occurred in which the right to the office descended through a female; when the former of these happened in the time of Henry VIII. the office was usurped by the 15th Earl against the right. When the other took place in the reign of Charles I. the right thus descended was claimed and established; and it is somewhat extraordinary, that the 18th Earl of Oxford, from whom, in the second instance, the right was derived by descent through a female to the Lord Willoughby, had himself no title to that office, but what was founded upon an infringement of the principle of that very rule, which, in this case of Lord Willoughby, established that the office was descendible through females to heirs general.

Lady Willoughby of Eresby, when she contends that the office was included in the award made by Henry VIII. and thereby given to the heir male, impeaches the determination of the House, which put her ancestor in possession of it in 1625 as the heir general.

The claim of her Grace Charlotte Duchess dowager of Athol and Baroness Strange cannot interfere with Lord Percy's right, as her Grace's claim is founded on her being the heir general of the same ancestor as the Lady Willoughby claims under, who was only second cousin and heir male to John the 14th Earl of Oxford.

His Grace the Duke of Ancafter is the heir male of an ancestor who came into possession of the office as heir general against the claim of the heir male; and cannot possibly therefore, it is apprehended, prove any right to succeed to it.

It is for these reasons humbly hoped, that the office will be adjudged to belong to Lord Percy, as heir general of John
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the 14th Earl of Oxford, who died seised of the same in 1526, to him and his heirs.

As soon as Messrs Howarth and Kenyon had finished their arguments, Mr. *Maddocks* was heard, as senior counsel for the Duchess Dowager of Athol. The case made out was in substance as follows :

Her Grace was stated to be the lineal descendant and heir general of John the 16th Earl of Oxford. This John had one son, Edward the 17th Earl, and a daughter married to Lord Willoughby of Eresby. Edward the 17th Earl married two wives, by the first he had Elizabeth Countess of Derby, and by the second Henry the 18th Earl of Oxford, who died without issue, in the year 1625. Lady Derby had James, Lord Strange, who had one daughter married to John Marquis of Athol, father of John first Duke of Athol, father of James the second Duke of Athol, lately deceased, who was father of the present Duchess of Athol.

On the death of Earl Henry in 1625, Robert the 19th Earl, second cousin to the deceased Duke, who succeeded to the title of Oxford, claimed the office of Lord Great Chamberlain, contending that the office had been annexed to the title of Lord Willoughby of Eresby, on the other hand claimed as their general to his deceased grand-father, John the 16th Earl, on the ground that he was next cousin of the whole blood to Henry the 18th Earl, lately deceased, and the respective claims being heard at the bar, three out of five judges were of opinion that the office did descend to the heir general; but previous to the delivering said opinion her Grace's ancestors, namely Elizabeth Countess of Derby, daughter to Edward the 17th Earl, and her husband, William Earl of Derby, presented a petition, and the petition was read; upon which the following questions were propounded to the consideration of the judges.

First, Whether the Earl of Oxford, who made the intail of the said office of Lord Great Chamberlain, was at that time seised of said office?

Secondly, Admitting that he was seised of it then, whether such an office may be conveyed by the way of limiting uses?

The judges not agreeing, their opinions were delivered seriatim on March 31, 1626, and three out of the five were of opinion, that the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England was come and descended unto the heir general of Henry the last Earl of Oxford,

This decision in favour of the heir general decided nothing as to the Countess of Derby's title, which was then before the House, the question therefore between the ancestor of Lady Priscilla Burrell, who was descended from Lord Willoughby of Eresby, became the subject of farther inquiry.

After the judges opinion had been delivered on the said 31st day of March 1626, it was ordered, that the counsel in behalf of the Earl of Derby, and his Countess Elizabeth, be heard the next morning or afternoon, and the counsel being heard on said day, viz. on the 1st of April 1626, their Lordship's resolved, that the office descended to Lord Willoughby [of Eresby], as cousin and heir general to Henry the last Earl of Oxford.

In the Journals of the fifth of the said month and year, an abstract of the whole proceedings is entered, and their Lordship's offer to his Majesty their humble opinions and advice, that said office of Lord Great Chamberlain, be declared by his Majesty, to appertain to said Lord Willoughby [of Eresby] and his heirs with a *salvo jure* to his Majesty.

The Dutches of Athol's counsel contended, that the question on which the judges first decided, and upon which too all the subsequent proceedings rested, was merely confined to the two claimants before the House when the question was first framed, namely, between the then Earl of Oxford and Lord Willoughby of Eresby, who was clearly heir general in preference to the Earl, was no more than a who very distant relation, whereas Lord Willoughby's mother was the daughter of John the sixteenth Earl, was sister to Edward the seventeenth Earl, to whom Robert the nineteenth Earl, the present claimant, was only collaterally related.

The only ground on which the judges could have framed their opinion, and the House afterwards have agreed to and confirmed it, was, that the Countess of Derby being only the sister of the half blood to Earl Henry, the eighteenth Earl, the person who died last seized of the office; whereas, Lord Willoughby was related, though more remotely, by the whole blood. It was strongly urged by her Grace's counsel, that the half-blood is no bar to a claim of a present dignity, because if it partakes of the nature of an honour descendible, as in the present case of a peerage, the succession must be governed by the same rules; that is to say, if the honour was descendible to the heir general, which was the title under which Lord Willoughby of Eresby claimed, that the Countess

Countess of Derby even in that light, was heir general to the first grantee; she was sister besides to Henry the last Earl, and heir general of John, the sixteenth Earl, under whom Lord Willoughby [of Eresby] derived his claim, with this difference too, that in each instance her competitor was one degree farther removed from the two successive Earls, who died seised of the honour, Edward and Henry.

If it was an estate in land, it was confessed, that the law would exclude the sister by the half-blood, by giving a preference to the cousin by the whole blood, but that it was presumed was not the point in issue, but whether, as in the case of a peerage, the heir general must claim under the first grantee, or under the person last seised; but it was humbly contended, that the only actual determination the House had ever come to, however extraordinary the conclusion might be, was, that in 1626, when both by the advice of the judges their Lordship's determined, that the honour descended to the heir general, though they misapplied the general principle to the particular case. It was a good bar to the then Earl of Oxford, who was not the heir general, and so far supported the claim of the Countess of Derby; but when the Earl of Oxford's claim to the Great Chamberlainship was set aside, the Countess of Derby was clearly heir general in respect of an honour, though her being of the half blood would have excluded her from taking any species of landed property by descent. The rule of inheritances was therefore unfitly applied to a claim of a title of honour, which is solely and exclusively descendible to the heir of the first grantee.

The office of Lord Great Chamberlain was a personal dignity, and held of the King by grand serjeantry. It differs from the law of landed descents in a great variety of instances. No fine of an honour can be levied, nor can an honour be alienated as in the case of landed property. A brother can never succeed, unless his name be inserted by way of remainder in the original grant. An honour, or the exercise of it cannot be divided, it must devolve, and of course be exercised by a single person. No length of time is a bar, as in the case of landed property. As an instance in point, personally applying to one of the competitors [Lady Eresby] the barony of Willoughby has been for a great length of time in abeyance, and has been only lately decided in favour of the present possessor. Their Lordship's Journals are full of proofs of this doctrine, and indeed, in some instances,

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baronies have been claimed, and the claims have been granted after the honours had lain dormant for several centuries.

It was not meant to impeach the determination of the House of Lords in the year 1626, but it was fair to suggest, that their Lordship's were misled, and upon an unintentional mis-stating of the case, perhaps induced to misjudge the claim of the Earl and Countess of Derby, their noble client's ancestors, and so far from supposing that the present was an antiquated claim, suddenly revived at so great a distance of time, and totally given up in the year 1626, the fact was, that at the end of almost forty years, namely in 1661, petitions were presented by the Earls of Derby and Oxford, for a re-hearing of their respective claims, and upon the question, after receiving the petitions, whether the first petitioner's claim, the Earl of Oxford, should be confined to matter of error, the votes were equal.

The Duchess Dowager of Athol cannot pretend to say what motives induced her noble ancestor from urging the matter of error, which upon the carrying of the question he might, if he pleased, bring forward; but whatever the noble Earl's reasons were for declining to give himself any farther trouble, it could not affect her right, which being personal and inalienable in its nature, could not be prejudiced by any species of negligence, misconception, or positive act of any of her intermediate ancestors, unless in the case of forfeiture for felony or treason, which was not pretended.

The House adjourned at half past six o'clock; counsel ordered to attend at two o'clock to-morrow afternoon.

May 10.

Mr. *Erskine* followed Mr. Maddocks in support of the claim of the Duchess Dowager of Athol, and cited several cases out of law-books, particularly from Rastal's and Coke's Entries, to support the general proposition on which his client's case was maintained, "that honours were not governed by the rules of law, as in cases of landed descent;" and a passage in Coke Lyttleton, wherein it was clearly laid down, that an office of honour was impartible between co-partners, but was sole and descindable, according to the nature of the grant made to the first grantee or ancestor, who possessed the honour or office, was cited.

The *Solicitor General* [Mr. Mansfield] was next heard on the part of Lady Priscilla Burrell, Baroness Willoughby of Eresby, and after stating her pedigree, that she was sister to
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*Solicitor
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the last Duke of Ancaſter, and lineally deſcended from Lady Willoughby, daughter to John the ſixteenth Earl of Oxford, and heir general to Henry the eighteenth Earl, who died ſeiſed of the office, and from Lord Willoughby, who ſucceeded to that office in 1626, and that the ſame had been regularly exerciſed by her anceſtors, thence downwards to the deceaſe of her late brother,---Mr. Solicitor proceeded to animadvert upon the caſes made out by the counſel for the two preceding claimants, Earl Percy and the Duchefs Dowager of Athol.

He ſtated, that in the fifth year of the reign of King Henry I. Alberic de Vere (the ſecond of that name, whoſe ſon was created Earl of Oxford by King Henry II.) received a grant of this office, to hold to him and his heirs, as freely and honourably as Robert Mallett, or any other perſon before or after him, ever held the ſame, and with ſuch liveries and lodgings of his court as belonged to that office.

From this period the family of the Veres continued in the enjoyment thereof: but upon the acceſſion of King Henry VIII. John the thirteenth Earl of Oxford, received a confirmation of this office to him and his heirs, and exerciſed the ſame until his deceaſe; when it deſcended to his nephew and heir, John the fourteenth Earl of Oxford, who died ſeiſed thereof in the year 1527, leaving three ſiſters, his coheirs at law; and John the fifteenth Earl of Oxford, his ſecond couſin, and heir-male.

Upon the deceaſe of the fourteenth Earl of Oxford, a diſpute aroſe between his heirs male, and his coheirs and their huſbands, concerning the poſſeſſion and partition of the honours, offices, and other hereditaments, which he died ſeiſed of; and in order to decide ſuch differences, all parties ſubmitted their titles to the determination and award of King Henry VIII. who, in the 23d year of his reign, made his award and decree between the ſaid parties, and thereby beſtowed this office, amongſt others, with ſeveral other hereditaments, upon John the fifteenth Earl of Oxford, in fee; and gave ſeveral manors, meſſuages, lands, and hereditaments, other part of the eſtates of John the fourteenth Earl, to each of his coheirs general: and by an act of Parliament, paſſed in the ſame year, (after reciting in general terms that ſuch an award had been made) it was enacted, that the ſaid John, then Earl of Oxford, ſhould hold and enjoy to him, and his heirs for ever, all ſuch caſtles, lands, offices, &c.

&c. and other hereditaments, which to the same Earl and his heirs, by the same award were decreed, with the usual saving clause of all right to all persons, except the therein before-mentioned John Nevill, Anthony Wingfield, and dame Elizabeth his wife, Edmund Knyghteley, and Ursula his wife, and the heirs of the said John Nevill, Elizabeth, and Ursula; and it was thereby also enacted, that the said John Nevill, dame Wingfield, and Ursula Knyghteley, according to the purport of the said award, should enjoy all such manors, &c. which to them were decreed by the said award, in such manner as in the said act is particularly mentioned.

In consequence of this award, John the fifteenth Earl of Oxford enjoyed, and in the 31st year of King Henry VIII. died, seised of the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England; and although it appears that his son John, the sixteenth Earl of Oxford, was interrupted in, and withheld from the enjoyment of this office, which was his undoubted inheritance, during the latter part of the reign of King Henry VIII. and the short reign of King Edward VI. yet he appears to have been restored to, and reinstated therein upon the accession of Queen Mary, and to have exercised the same at her coronation, and to have died seised thereof, in the fourth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and upon his decease, his son Edward the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, inherited and enjoyed this office, and transmitted the same to his son Henry de Vere, the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, who died seised thereof in the year 1625, without issue; which occasioned the dispute between the heirs male and heirs general of the last named Earl, particularly mentioned in the foregoing case, which was finally decided in favour of the person from whom Lady Willoughby of Eresby is lineally descended.

In the case stated by Lord Percy (supposing his descent from Dorothy, wife of Lord Latimer, can be proved) his claim depends solely upon the before-mentioned confirmation of this office, to John the thirteenth Earl of Oxford, in fee, unaccompanied with any exercise or enjoyment of it, or any claim thereto by those from whom the noble Lord is descended, from the 18th year of the reign of Henry VIII. in the year 1527, down to this present time, a period of above two centuries and a half, and in direct opposition to the award of his Majesty, confirmed by act of Parliament, and acquiesced under by all the ancestors of Lord Percy.

But

But as a full and complete answer to the claim now set up by Lord Percy, it is submitted to this honourable House, that the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, being an office with considerable fees and profits, annexed to it, may be sued for and recovered by an assize, or other real action; that it falls within the description of hereditaments in the statute of limitations, passed in the 32d year of the reign of King Henry VIII. which might be pleaded in bar to any action brought by Lord Percy, for the recovery of it: and that your Lordships will not give any extraordinary countenance to a claim which has lain dormant for above two centuries and a half, and to which, if prosecuted in a court of law, there would be an unanswerable objection.

With respect to the claim of the Duchess Dowager of Athol; supposing the facts stated in support of it, as far as they relate to the dispute concerning this high office in 1625, to be true; the conclusion from those facts does by no means follow; nor does it appear that there was any error or mistake in the certificate of this honourable House to King Charles I. in the year 1625.

For as it is admitted by the Duchess Dowager of Athol, that the several titles of all the competitors in 1625 were before the House, and that the opinion of the majority of the judges, upon the contest between the heir-general and the heir-male of Henry, the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, was in favour of the heir-general; and that subsequent to the delivery of that opinion, viz. on the 1st of April, 1626, the council for the then Lord Willoughby and Lady Derby (both of whom claimed in the character of heir-general to the eighteenth Earl of Oxford) were heard before this House. It clearly follows, that the only possible dispute between the counsel for these parties; the only possible subject matter of debate for the House upon the arguments of these counsel, and the respective claims of the then competitors for this office must have been, whether the then Lord Willoughby or Lady Derby should be considered, upon that occasion, as heir-general of the then late Earl of Oxford; and whether the rules applicable to the descent of lands and other real property, or those which are confined to dignities and titles of nobility, should govern the decision of the question then before them. It is therefore insisted, on the grounds of said solemn determination, that this office descended to Lord Willoughby, as cousin and heir-general to Henry,

then last Earl of Oxford, without calling in, or requiring the assistance of the judges, is a clear decision of this honourable House, that the rules relative to real property, and not to titles of honour and nobility, are applicable to, and must govern the descent of this office; and that the certificate afterwards presented to his Majesty, (although there may be some inaccuracy in the expression) was perfectly consistent with the opinion of this honourable House upon the claims of the several parties, which had been fairly and fully discussed before them.

The House rose at six o'clock, and adjourned to the next day.

May 11.

As soon as the private business was finished, Mr. *Dunning*, as second counsel for Lady Eversby, resumed the adjourned pleadings of the preceding day, and proceeded to illustrate such part of the case and arguments as had been more slightly touched, or less insisted upon by his learned leader. He argued the matter with infinite ability and ingenuity; but as we have previously given the general outline which marked the leading features of this Lady's case, we forbear to pursue this learned advocate through the various distinctions and nice legal definitions which he displayed on this occasion.

Mr. *Macdonald*, counsel for the fourth claimant in this cause, the present Duke of Ancafter, informed their Lordships, that he would not trouble them at that time with a particular detail of the arguments and facts upon which his client grounded his expectation of being appointed to the high office then in litigation, as he understood it was the intention of the House to decide first concerning the merits of the claims made by Lord Percy and the Duchess of Athol, before they proceeded to an ultimate determination upon the general question, which of the parties were now by law entitled to exercise the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England. He would therefore reserve himself till these other claims had been disposed of according to the pleasure of their Lordships.

Mr. *Kenyon* was next called upon to reply in behalf of the Duchess of Athol, as was Mr. *Maddocks* in behalf of Lord Percy.

Earl of
Mansfield

The counsel by order being withdrawn from the bar, the Earl of *Mansfield* rose and observed, that out of the four claimants

claimants who had made application to that House for their Lordships determination on the question, who possessed the legal rights to the office of Great Chamberlain of England, there were two who rested their pretensions on a different foundation from the rest, and were liable to different objections. These were, first, Lord Percy, who derived his claim from the circumstance of his being a direct and lineal descendant of Margaret, daughter of Sir George De Vere, next brother to John the 13th Earl, and sister to John De Vere the 14th Earl of Oxford, who succeeded to his uncle John the 13th Earl, who died without issue, both of whom died seised of the said office of Lord Great Chamberlain, a great many years before the place devolved to the possession of those subsequent Earls of Oxford, from whom the other claimants derived their respective claims, namely, John the 16th, Edward the 17th, and Henry the 18th Earls of Oxford. The noble Lady's case, which stood on the same ground so far as the question was to be considered as a question of mere law, was the Duchess Dowager of Athol. It is true she claims the right to the office from being descended from the same immediate stock as the Lady Willoughby of Eresby, and the present Duke of Ancafter, namely, being descended from the grantee, Edward the 17th Earl, whose eldest daughter was married to the Earl of Derby; whereas Lady Willoughby is more remotely related, being but descended from John the 16th Earl, yet there was one objection which applied in common to both cases which had been alluded to, and that was that they came within the letter of the statute of limitations. Upwards of 250 years had elapsed since the person died from whom Lord Percy claimed as the source of his pretensions; and 150 had passed away since the predecessor of the Duchess of Athol, from whom she at this time claimed, had asserted her pretensions. A leading question therefore for their Lordships to determine was, whether or no these cases came within the act of limitation, which confines the claim to be made and maintained by some legal process or suit at law sixty years from the year the supposed cause of action first accrued. To decide this question of law in the best manner possible, he would move that the opinion of the learned judges be taken upon it, and that before the merits of the general question underwent further discussion. By deciding upon this question in this stage of the business, the cause would be considerably relieved; for if the decree of the learned

judges should happen to turn out in favour of the opinion, that the two cases described within the statute of limitation, passed in the reign of Henry VIII. then they would be separated from the contention, and the claims would of course be considerably simplified. If the decree should be of a contrary kind, then their Lordships would be relieved from all ambiguity, upon a point that would constitute a leading feature in the decision they were to make. It had been suggested to him by a noble Lord, [Lord Radnor] that it would be necessary, in *ipso lumine* of their investigation then before them, to put this question to the learned judges, whether or no the mode of urging the right to this office by a petition to the King was a proper mode or no? He should not have taken notice of this suggestion at that time, but for the respect he bore to the quarter from whence it originated. He would only observe, however, that this method of proceeding had been the prescriptive practice of ages. In all the succession, in all the contentions that had happened, no other mode of application had been recorded. In the determination which took place before the House of Lords, in the reign of Charles I. and was afterwards confirmed by the combined branches of the legislature, there were many of the first lawyers in the kingdom concerned, and there never was a period when there existed a greater number of able, honest, learned, ingenious counsel, than at that time; and the united opinion of each individual, however they might disagree in other parts, was in this instance exactly the same, having all concurred that a petition to the Crown was the proper mode of urging the claim to this office. It had always been conceived to be the proper mode ever since; but he should not have rested upon custom only, but would have taken the opinion of the judges in conformity to this intimation given to him by the noble Lord, had he remembered an instance where a question was referred to the opinion of the judges, which had not previously been argued at the bar of that House. None of the parties had thought it worth their while to urge any arguments on that point in the present instance, and therefore he did not conceive it to be agreeable to established usage to refer the question in the manner proposed for by the noble Earl. He had nothing farther to urge at that time than just to move their Lordships, that the following question should be referred to the opinion of the judges, namely, "Whether the right of Earl Percy, also the right of the Duchess Dowager of Athol, to the office of Lord Great Chamberlain, supposing

supposing their pedigree and cases to be as stated by their counsel, are barred by the statute of limitations?

This motion was about to be put, when the *Earl of Denbigh* rose, and very unexpectedly ventured into a competition with the learned Lord who spoke last, concerning the regularity and necessary form of their Lordships' proceedings. He contended, that it was not competent to their Lordships to come to any separate or distinct decision upon any of the respective clauses till the parties were all heard. That was not the case in the present instance, Lady Willoughby of Eresby, and her husband, as well as the noble Duke her uncle, and her noble relation Lord Robert Bertie, had not been yet heard upon the merits of their respective claims, consequently the same not being before the House, could not either legally or equitably be decided.

Not a syllable was offered in reply, but the motion already stated was put and agreed to, and all the judges desired to attend that House on Wednesday next, in order to give their opinion thereon. — Adjourned at seven o'clock to Monday.

May 14.

Private business. No debate.

May 15.

Nothing but private business. Notice given from the woolsack, that the judges desired farther time to consider of the question framed in the House on Friday, relative to the claims of Earl Percy and the Duchess Dowager of Athol, to the Great Chamberlainship of England, which had been referred to them by their Lordships for their opinion,

May 16,

Private business. No debate.

May 17.

Private business. No debate.

May 18,

As soon as the private business was over, the *Lord Chief Baron* (Skinner) being the only chief judge not a member of that House, rose to give the opinion of himself and his brethren, in answer to the question propounded to all the judges, on the respective claims of Earl Percy, and the Duchess Dowager of

of Athol, respecting the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, namely:

1. Whether the right of Earl Percy, also the Duchess Dowager of Athol, to the office of Lord Great Chamberlain, supposing their pedigree and cases to be as stated by their counsellors, are barred by the statute of limitations?

He observed, that the question he and his brethren were called to give an opinion upon, applied equally to both cases; to that of the noble Earl and to the Lady, because the they were both barred by the statute of limitations, or neither.

The statute he observed, was in the way of a remedial law, and was passed chiefly for promoting the quiet, ease, and security of the subject, and for defending the possessions of landed property, from the effect of dormant or remote claims, which it would be difficult if not impossible, however unjust or ill-founded, to meet or defeat in a court of justice, where the proof was put upon the possessor, to shew an indefeasible title. The numerous evils and endless litigations, which sprang from this defect in the common law, after property began to be alienated, and transferred from hand to hand, became so great a grievance, that in the 32d year of Henry VIII. the legislature found it necessary to pass a law which enacted, that any claim which was presumed to accrue for a longer period than sixty years, previous to bringing the writ of right, should be deemed a nullity in law, and an interrupted possession for that space of time deemed an effectual bar to all claims whatsoever. Upon this short view of the claims of Earl Percy, and the Duchess Dowager of Athol, it was clear that they had come within the letter of the statute, none of the noble Earl's ancestors having exercised the office of Great Chamberlain since the reign of Henry VIII. a period of about two hundred and fifty years; nor of the Duchess of Athol, the immediate family of Vere, under whom derived her claim since 1625, a period of upwards of one hundred and fifty years.

But it had been argued in both cases, very ingeniously at the bar; First, that the Great Chamberlainship was inalienable by the person intitled to hold it, nor could be disposed of or parted with, nor could it lapse or be transferred to another, by any gift, bequest, fine levied or come back to the original grantor, the King, but by forfeiture, for some crime working a corruption of blood.

Secondly, that it was not necessary to prove that his ancestor of the person under whom he derived his claim, had seized no more than in a writ of dower, and in several other species of writs, where it was sufficient to state the passing of
the

the deed or record of the grant, without proving the actual seisin, thereby making out the title of the ancestor or other person under whom the party claimed.

Thirdly, the intrusion and subsequent possession, having been wrong, *ab initio*, no length of time or possession could establish a title in the wrong doer.

It was likewise argued, that the present was an hereditament, and not of course bound by the rules which directed landed descent; and lastly, that although the statute of limitations was a general law, affecting landed property, it was not understood to apply to the patrimony of the church, which was given as a gratuity or reward for personal service.

In answer to the first, that the office could not be alienated or divested out of the person seised, the fact seemed clearly otherwise, from the instances stated and acknowledged in all the cases; for the same had been rendered into the King's hands, and such surrender had hitherto remained unimpeached. In another instance, it had been annexed to the title, and part of the possessions of an Earl of Oxford, under an award of Henry VIII. and by the virtue of an act of Parliament, which was in the nature of an agreement among the parties litigant, and made binding upon their successors; which agreement was acquiesced in by all the parties then in being for three generations.

The present claim, he observed, differed from writs of dower, and other writs of a similar nature, for it was sufficient to prove an endowment to establish the right, which was all that was left to the jury to try; whereas, to shew the right to an office, it was necessary to prove that the person last seised was intitled to exercise that office, which was not a matter in a variety of cases which could be determined by a jury, because it might possibly involve a question of law; or though the person described to have exercised the office might have been seised thereof, he might have been seised of the same, to the wrong and prejudice of another person; the fact of seisin was one thing, the right to that seisin formed another question; consequently, mere seisin was not deemed sufficient to establish a title; there needed no better proof than although the fifteenth Earl of Oxford was seised of the office, and exercised it, performing all the necessary functions, he deemed it farther necessary to have his title confirmed by Henry VIII.

It was urged at the bar, that the office of Great Chamberlain was an hereditament, and therefore must go to the male heir; or, in default of one, to the heir general. This was



a law doctrine, which when he heard it, he confessed much surprised him; he had ever learnt to hold the very contrary doctrine to be law; and had understood that hereditaments were alienable in the same manner as lands, and subject to all the rules of landed descent. He supposed by hereditaments was meant, all offices, franchises, duties, tolls, &c. called incorporeal hereditaments, in contradiction to profits, reserved rents, &c. growing or issuing from the soil. He believed it was enough to observe, that every day's experience proved the contrary; that all hereditaments of an incorporeal nature, when occasion required, were alienated, sold, or parted with, just in the same manner as landed property, unless the same was specially prohibited by some law, or confirmed by custom time immemorial. An argument had likewise been urged nearly allied to the latter, that the statute of limitations was not a general law, but left the common law in being at the time, just where it found it, except where the object of the statute was specially pointed out. Such, it was said, was the case respecting all ecclesiastical bodies and the clergy in general, upon whose claims the statute did not operate. The reason was clear, upon more accounts than one, because there was a law passed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, to prevent alienations of the possessions of the church; whereas the law respecting the descent of lands, was calculated to encourage frequent changes, and transfers of that species of property. The patrimony of the church was besides in the nature of a corporate trust, for the benefit of the successors as well as the persons in possession; and the maxim in law, that no length of time can bar the claims of the church, is a maxim founded in wisdom and sound policy; because it is a perpetual preventative to those who might be otherwise tempted to enter into fraudulent agreements with those in possession, to the damage and injury of all their future successors; as the person who should part with a valuable consideration, would be liable to be called in question at any future period, however distant.

For these reasons, and several others of a collateral nature, he informed their Lordships, that the judges were unanimously of opinion, that the claims of Earl Percy and the Duchess Dowager of Athol are barred by the statute of limitations.

Notice was then given to Lady Willoughby of Eresby and the Duke of Anteaſter's counsel to proceed in making out their cases, as stated in the petitions presented to that House. The House adjourned to Monday.

May 21.

As soon as prayers were over, Mr. Solicitor General, as counsel for Lady Willoughby of Eresby, in support of her claim to the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England by deputy, against that of her uncle, the present Duke of Ancaster, opened very fully his noble client's case. We shall pass over such parts of it as have been already stated in the foregoing pleadings, and merely confine ourselves to those points which applied particularly to that part of her noble competitor's.

Mr. Solicitor General proceeded to state, that in consequence of the before-mentioned resolution of the House of Peers, in the year 1626, and from that time to the decease of Robert late Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven, in the month of July last (a period of above one hundred and fifty years) this high office had been enjoyed without any interruption by Robert Lord Willoughby and his descendants, in a lineal succession, from father to son: for upon the decease of Robert Lord Willoughby (who was created Earl of Lindsey, in the second year of King Charles I. and killed at the battle of Edge-Hill on the 23d of October, 1642,) he was succeeded in all his titles and honours by his eldest son Mountagu, the second Earl of Lindsey, who was summoned to Parliament in his father's life-time, in the fifteenth year of King Charles I. and continuing firmly attached to the King, had not, during the remainder of his unfortunate reign, and the subsequent interregnum, any opportunity of exercising his office: but at the restoration of King Charles II. the said Mountagu, Earl of Lindsey, exhibited his claim to this great hereditary office, and upon his Majesty's coronation was admitted to the exercise thereof, and continued to enjoy the same until his decease in July, 1666.

Upon the death of the said Earl Mountagu, all his titles and honours, and amongst others, this hereditary office, descended upon, and were enjoyed by his eldest son Robert, the third Earl of Lindsey, until the month of May, 1701, when he died, leaving Robert, the fourth Earl of Lindsey, his eldest son and heir; who in his father's life-time, in April 1690, had been summoned to, and sat in Parliament as Lord Willoughby of Eresby; and on his father's death succeeded to the Earldom of Lindsey, and the hereditary office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England; and was afterwards, in the year 1706, created Marquis of Lindsey,

and in the year 1715, Duke of Ancaſter and Keſſeven; and continued in the enjoyment of this office until his deceaſe, in July 1723; when all his titles and honours deſcended upon his eldeſt ſon Peregrine, the ſecond Duke of Ancaſter and Keſſeven, who was likewiſe in the life-time of his father, when Marquiſ of Linſey, ſummoned to Parliament in the month of March, 1714, as Lord Willoughby of Ereſby, and after his father's death continued in the exerciſe and enjoyment of this hereditary office, until January 1741, when he died: upon his death his eldeſt ſon Peregrine, the third Duke of Ancaſter and Keſſeven, ſucceeded to the ſaid Dukedom, and all the other titles and honours that his anceſtors had been in poſſeſſion of, and among others, to this office, which he exerciſed and enjoyed until the 12th of Auguſt, 1778, when he died, leaving Robert, the late Duke of Ancaſter and Keſſeven, his only ſon, who thereupon inherited and ſucceeded to all the titles and honours that the laſt mentioned Duke Peregrine died ſeiſed of, and amongſt others, to the hereditary office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, which he exerciſed and continued ſeiſed of until the time of his deceaſe.

After ſtating the deſcent down to Lady Willoughby of Ereſby, he obſerved, that ſhe was married to Peter Burrell, eſq. one of the petitioner's in the preſent caſe, and that the ſaid Lady, with her ſiſter Lady Georgina, were ſiſters and co-heirs to Robert the fourth Duke, who died without iſſue; that the office in queſtion had devolved on Lady Willoughby of Ereſby, as eldeſt co-heir, and that in her right the ſaid Mr. Burrell is intitled to execute the office of Lord Great Chamberlain, becauſe it is an hereditary office in groſs, held in grand ſerjeantry, which in the caſe of co-heirs always deſcends upon the eldeſt, and is to be executed by the huſband, which was warranted by uſage, as appears from the authority of ſeveral caſes herein after ſtated.

The office of Steward of England was the inheritance of Hugh de Grentemeſnil, who held the honour of Hinckley by that ſervice, and died leaving two daughters his co-heirs; Petronella (or Parnell) the eldeſt, married Robert Earl of Leiceſter, who in her right became ſeiſed of the office of Steward of England.

And in one other inſtance in the ſame noble family, this office deſcended upon the eldeſt co-heir, and was executed by her huſband, for the laſt mentioned Robert Earl of Leiceſter died, leaving iſſue by his ſaid wife one ſon, ſurnamed

Fitz Parnell, and two daughters Amicia and Margery. In the year 1204, Robert Fitz Parnell died without issue, leaving his sisters co-heirs, the eldest of whom (Amicia) being married to Simon de Montford, he, in her right, became seized of the honor of Hinckley and office of Steward of England.

After the decease of Walter, who was constable of England in the reign of King Henry I. Milo Fitz Walter, his son (who for his services to the Empress Maud, was by her created Earl of Hereford) enjoyed the last mentioned office, and died in the year 1144, leaving five sons and three daughters, Margery, Bertie and Lucie; the five sons successively enjoyed this office, and died without issue, and upon the decease of the survivor of them, the office of Constable of England came to Humphry de Bohun, by his marriage with Margery, the eldest daughter of Milo Fitz Walter.

This office also descended a second time upon the eldest co-heir, and was executed by her husband, for after it had been introduced into the last mentioned family, in the manner herein before stated, it was enjoyed by the descendants of Humphry de Bohun for several generations, in a lineal male succession, until the forty-sixth of Edward III. when the male line of this family failed by the death of Humphry, the then Earl of Hereford, and Constable of England, leaving issue only two daughters, Eleanor and Mary, his co-heirs, between whom the great inheritance of this family was divided.

Eleanor, the eldest daughter, married Thomas of Woodstock, (son to King Edward III.) afterwards Duke of Gloucester; the second married Henry Earl of Derby, afterwards King Henry IV. Upon the marriage of the eldest daughter in the fiftieth year of the reign of Edward III. the office of Constable of Eng'and was granted to her husband by letters patent, but the letters patent recite the office to be in the King's hands, by reason of the minority of the heirs of the Earl of Hereford, and granted to hold during the King's pleasure, and so long as the said office should remain in the King's hands from the cause aforesaid. Three years afterwards, viz. in the third year of Richard II. the eldest daughter having attained her age of twenty-one years had livery of her lands, and thereby the former letters patent were determined, but her husband continued to be Constable of England to his death in the twentieth year of Richard II. without any new grant, and therefore in her right.

The office of Champion of England, which is of the same tenure with the two great offices aforesaid, having descended

to an heir female, appears to have been executed at the coronation of King Richard II. by John Dymock, in right of his wife.

In the third year of the reign of King Henry III. William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, died seised in fee of the office of Marshal of England, leaving five sons and five daughters; all the said sons successively enjoyed the said Earldom and office, and died without issue, and upon the death of the survivor of these sons, in the thirtieth of Henry III. Maud, who was the eldest of these daughters, and the widow of Hugh Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, claimed the office of Marshal, as the eldest inheritrix, of the person last seised thereof, and her claim was allowed, and the Marshal's rod delivered to her, which, with the King's licence, she gave to her son, Roger Bigod, then Earl of Norfolk, who did homage for the same. This appears by a writ directed to the treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer, commanding them to admit Roger Bigod Earl of Norfolk, to the Marshal's seat in the Exchequer, and the writ recites, that Matilda, Countess of Norfolk, had, with the King's licence, appointed the said Earl to the office: "*Quæ Matilda (it is said) habet Esuiciam Hæreditatis Walteri Mareſcalli et cui Rex ſarationes conſeruat Virgam Mareſcal'cie.*"

The claim of the present Duke of Ancaſter and Lord Robert Bertie to the office has been reſted upon three different grounds:

In the first place it has been urged, that by an implied construction of the act of precedence, passed in the first year of King George I. this office is annexed to the honour and dukedom of Ancaſter, and therefore must be enjoyed by the person who is intitled to that honour and dukedom.

—In answer to this it is insisted, that this act of Parliament related merely to the regulation of the precedence of Robert then Marquis of Lindsey, and those who might then after be Dukes of Ancaſter, and Great Chamberlains of England, and to prevent them from taking place before other peers of equal rank, which under the statute of precedence passed in the reign of Henry VIII. they would otherwise have been intitled to do, and that this private Act of Parliament in the reign of king George I. neither gave or took away any title to this office, which existed antecedent to that act of Parliament.

The second argument in favour of the present Duke of Ancaſter and Lord Robert Bertie is, that the present Duke is the immediate heir male descended from the line of the Veres, Earls of Oxford, and as such intitled to this office.—But in answer to this it is contended, that the present Duke

of Ancaſter cannot, with any propriety, be called the heir male of the Veres, Earls of Oxford, having deſcended from a female branch of that family, that is to ſay, Mary, ſiſter of Edward Earl of Oxford; and ſtill farther it is inſiſted on the behalf of Mr. Burrell, and Lady Willoughby of Ereſby, that upon a caſe ſo ſolemnly argued and thoroughly conſidered, as that was in the year 1626, reſpecting this office, the deciſion there in favour of the heir general in preference to the title of the heir male of the Earl Henry, is an expreſs and poſitive authority in favour of the laſt mentioned claimants, and a direct bar to the preſent Duke of Ancaſter's claim in the character of heir male of the Oxford family, and that the authority of this deciſion receives additional weight from the conduct of the Houſe of Peers upon the ſubſequent petition in 1661, and the length of time during which this high office has been enjoyed by thoſe claiming under the heir general of Henry Earl of Oxford.

The third argument in favour of the preſent Duke (or rather in favour of the right of his Maſteſty to grant this office), is, that this office cannot be held by a female.

But in the preſent inſtance it is not contended that this office can be executed by a female, but that in the event which has happened, the office deſcends upon Lady Willoughby of Ereſby, as the eldeſt co-heir of the laſt Duke of Ancaſter, and that her huſband is intitled to execute the ſame. And this claim is well warranted not only from the authority of the ſeveral caſes herein before-mentioned, but alſo by the opinion of all the judges in the ſixth year of King Henry VIII. upon a caſe ſtated to them relative to the claim of the Duke of Buckingham to the office of Conſtable of England, by deſcent from the eldeſt of the two co-heirs of the Earl of Hereford.

It hath alſo been alledged, that this office cannot be executed by any perſon under the degree of a Lord of Parliament, and that no inſtance can be produced of any perſon of an inferior degree having been in the poſſeſſion of it.—In answer to this it is to be obſerved, that as this office was granted many centuries ago to the family of the Veres, who were ſoon afterwards created Earls of Oxford, and continued for many generations in the enjoyment of this office, it is not to be expected that many inſtances ſhould occur of this office having been enjoyed by a commoner; but that however one ſuch inſtance is to be met with, for it appears that in the firſt year of Henry IV. he granted this office

to

to Sir Thomas de Erpingham, who by virtue of this grant claimed to execute the same at the coronation of King Henry IV. and that this claim was allowed, and Sir Thomas de Erpingham executed the same accordingly; which precedent is sufficient to shew, that some of the most honourable and important parts of the service of this office may be executed by a commoner.—That Lady Willoughby of Eresby, being lineally descended from, and one of the co-heirs general of Robert Lord Willoughby, who in the year 1626, was admitted to this high office as the heir general of Henry then late Earl of Oxford; the said claimants, Peter Burrell and Lady Willoughby, of Eresby, his wife, hope this honourable House will be fully satisfied of this justice of their several claims to the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, and the liberties and dignities thereof.

Mr. *Dunning* followed Mr. Solicitor General, and in a very able, but short speech, observed, that no argument could be set up against the present claimants, that of Lady Eresby, to the possession and profits of the office, and of Mr. Burrell, to the exercising of the same in right of his wife, which did not virtually defeat the title of the two other noble petitioners, the present Duke of Ancafter and Lord Robert Bertie; but that matter having been already decided by their Lordships, by the excluding the male heirs of the family of the Vere, in the person of Earl Percy, and the claim of the Duchess Dowager of Athol, as the next in lineal descent from Edward the 17th Earl of Oxford, he expected that the noble petitioners to whom he had last alluded, would perceive that they had not a foot of ground to stand upon, because every reason which supported their case, went in fact to the defeating the title of the whole family of Bertie; the descent passed through a female, the first Lady Eresby, sister to John the 16th Earl of Oxford, who made out his title as heir general to Henry the 18th Earl of Oxford. It was therefore absurd, in his opinion, to rest a title on the claim of being the heir male of the family of Vere, when in fact, the first Earl of Lindsey, the common ancestor of all the noble claimants, was preferred by a solemn opinion of the judges, and established by a determination of that House in the year 1626, to the 19th Earl of Oxford, who was the lineal male descendant, whose name was Vere, and descended from the Veres, Earls of Oxford, who had been in possession of the office for upwards of four centuries with little or no interruption.

The only two objections, in his apprehension, which carried the least weight; were first, that it was incompetent for
a woman

a woman to exercise the office, and whenever that happened to be the case, the King appointed a Lord Great Chamberlain for the time, till some person disqualified, by non-age, came of years to discharge the functions of the office in his own person, as a matter of right, and that since the creating of the office it had never been exercised by a commoner. To the first objection it was sufficient to answer, that the son, if of age, the husband, or next of kin, had been always appointed under this species of tenure; and to the second, that there was a case in point, which was that of Sir Thomas de Erpingham, in the reign of Henry IV. who exercised all the duties and privileges of that office in the most full and ample extent, for there could not, in his opinion, be a more extensive exercise of the plenitude of the Lord Great Chamberlain's power, than that of discharging the duties of that high office at a coronation, which was the fact, in the case so ably and accurately stated by his learned leader, in the reign of Henry IV.

After several arguments of a collateral nature, Mr. Dunning concluded, with expressing his most perfect confidence that their Lordships would think with him, that the office had devolved on his noble client, Lady Willoughby of Kresby; and, that agreeably to ancient usage, when the office descended upon a female, or an infant, that in the latter instance, with the pleasure and approbation of the King, the next of kin, or *prochain amy*, was appointed *pro tempore*, and in the event of the office, devolving upon a *feme covert*, her husband was appointed to act during the minority of the person next seized, or in case of no issue, till the office had by the death of his wife descended upon some other person.

M^r. Macdonald, after stating the pedigree of his two noble clients, the Duke of Ancaſter, and his uncle Lord Robert Bertie, offered the following, among other arguments, in support of their respective claims.

It was incumbent upon him, he said, to prove, that a female heir is equally incapable of holding as she is of exercising the office, and that she cannot by her deputy or by any husband upon whom she may bestow herself in marriage, legally claim a right to hold or to exercise this office, but merely by the pleasure of the King and by his special licence; and that in the present case, the right to appoint the Lord Great Chamberlain is vested in the King, until there be an heir capable of holding and exercising the office, and that the petitioner, the Duke of Ancaſter, appears to be the fittest person in his family, by the gracious favour of his Majesty

Majesty to hold and exercise such office under all the circumstances of this case.

If the supposed grant to Sir Thomas de Erpingham for life, ever existed, it would be found as well as all the other originals and insepimus, or confirmatory grants of this high dignity. But it is admitted by the Attorney-General, that it does not appear that he held the office by a grant for life.

If by a grant of the crown is meant a temporary appointment, it is admitted, that under such an appointment Sir Thomas de Erpingham did execute the office of Great Chamberlain at the coronation of King Henry IV. and so the Lord Chief Justice Crew, in the year 1626, states the fact to be, that he for that time only was appointed by the King to do it; but that Sir Thomas de Erpingham, ever in fact held or exercised the whole of the office, or had any grant or appointment for so doing, is denied, and if this instance is insisted upon, such fact ought to be proved and satisfactorily made out. Two of the high duties of the office are specified in the act of Parliament, and in the execution of which the precedency is still left, viz. to attend the King in person, and to introduce Peers into the House of Lords, neither of which duties appear or are pretended to have been performed by Sir Thomas de Erpingham.

As to the other instance, in which he was so unfortunate to differ from the learned opinion of the Attorney-General, as expressed in his report, viz. the right of the eldest female heir to hold this high dignity and office, and to exercise it by her husband; it may be proper first to observe, that the case in 1626, does not decide any such point, it goes no farther than to decide the preference of the heir general, capable of holding and exercising the office, to that of the heir male opposed to it.

The present point therefore must depend upon the consideration of the nature of this high dignity and office.

It is a dignity and office of the highest personal trust and confidence; it is held of the royal person only.

Its principal duty is an attendance on the sacred person of the King, to bring his inmost garment, to apparel him in his royal robes and ornaments.

It is a mere personal dignity, fixed in the blood, and descendible to posterity as long as the heirs are capable of holding it.

It is annexed to nothing local or real, and though it has a descensible quality, viz. to a capable heir, yet it has not all the qualities or properties of a fee-simple.

For it cannot be intailed by the owner, because that might change the grant.

It is unalienable by the owner, for the grantee cannot transfer the trust to another, without the assent of the grantor.

In the present instance, two of the specified disabilities occur, those of a female and infant heir.

The Attorney-General, in his report, inclines to think that there is no difference in this respect, between offices annexed to lands, manors, or honours, and a personal dignity or office, like the present, which is in gross.

And he admits that the offices of Constable, Steward, and Champion, are annexed to some honour, manor, or lands, as they undoubtedly are.

But it is apprehended that the legal difference is clear and manifest.

All lands and inheritances local, may be conveyed by way of use. But inheritances personal, which have no relation to lands or local hereditaments, cannot be conveyed by way of use---For if so, this great officer might be made and unmade at the pleasure of the grantee, and there would be two distinct confidences, the King's confidence and that of the cestui qui use.

Offices annexed to local inheritances, are rather in the light of services reserved instead of rent.

The inheritances would be forfeitable by non-performance of the services.

If the owners of such inheritances were incapable of performing the services, they must of necessity find and tender their deputy, to prevent a forfeiture.

The King would allow such deputy, if a proper one; if not, he would appoint one; but it is conceived that he could not seize the inheritance, though he disapproved of the deputy---there being no refusal of the service, but an offer and tender of it.

This is apprehended to be the case where such local inheritances descend to a female heir, or to coparceners. And it must be reasonably supposed, that the husband of such female, or of the eldest coparcener, would be the properest person to perform the services, as being more interested than a mere deputy, to attend the due performance of them; and if the

other coparceners had husbands, as one could only execute the office, it is fit, that one should be the eldest.

But it is conceived that the profits of the lands, manors, or honours, to which such offices were annexed, would belong to the coparceners.

This doctrine appears in the case of the Duke of Buckingham, quoted by Mr. Attorney General, and mentioned in Dyer's Reports, 285, b. Plow. 39. but more fully in Keilway's Reports, 170, 171.

Humphrey de Bohun, late Earl of Hereford, held the manors of Harlefield, Newnam, and Whytenhurst, in the county of Gloucester, of the King, by the service of being Constable of England, and had issue two daughters, and died seized; they entered into the manors, and took husbands. The husband of the youngest was afterwards King of England, and partition was made, and the King and his Queen took the manor of Whytenhurst for their part, and the other two manors were allotted to the other husband and his wife:—Three questions were made:

First, If the reservation of this tenure was good; that is, whether this office was or could be reserved upon the scottment or not? and the Judges held that the office might be reserved, and that the reservation of the tenure was good.

Secondly, When the manors were descended to the wives, how they could execute the office? and the Judges seemed clear, that they might make their sufficient deputy to exercise the office for them. So this question and answer are stated in Keilway's Reports.—In Dyer's Reports thus:

How the daughters before marriage could execute the office?

It was clearly resolved that they might make their sufficient deputy to execute it for them, and after the marriage the husband of the eldest might execute it solely.

But it was clear, that the profits of the manors belonged to them equally, and making but one heir, the husband of the eldest would properly be deemed to have the preference of executing the office solely; and as both of the husbands could not be the officer, but one of them only, it was more fit that it should be exercised by the husband of the eldest. This is conformable to the general law of coparceners in matters not divisible, and where there is nothing for contribution or allowance to the younger, viz the eldest to have the first presentation to a living, the first draught of fish in a fishery, and the enjoyment of a common; the eldest to have it first,

for one portion of time, and then the youngest for the same time afterwards.

But the third question in the Duke of Buckingham's case shews it to be in no way in point to the present case.

The third question was more difficult, says the Report of Dyer; the Report of Keilway calls it the more diffuse question; and it came to be so diffuse that the sight of the question is at last lost.—Viz. Whether by the unity of parcel of the tenancy in the King, the office was determined, or it should have its existence and continuance in the other coparcener. It was resolved clearly, says the Report of Dyer, that it should have its continuance in the other, for otherwise they would have the two manors, without doing any service for them; and they are compelled at the pleasure of the King to exercise the office; and the King may refuse it at his election and pleasure; as well as a common Lord of a feignory may refuse the receipt of homage of his tenant, if it be not homage ancient.

By this it clearly appears to have been an office annexed to the manors, or more properly, a service reserved for them instead of rent.

The office of Champion of England, in the Dymock family, is a service reserved upon the grant of lands, and is subject to the same observations as the offices of Constable and Steward.

The last case quoted by Mr. Attorney-General, of the Marshal of England, is supposed to be directly in point, as being an office in gross, and not annexed or tied to any lands or local inheritance.

But this seems to be a mistake, for it appears by a record, still preserved in the Exchequer, of the presentment of jurors at assizes held at Windsor, in Berkshire, before the King's Justices itinerant, in the twelfth year of Edward I. as to the tenure of certain lands within the hundred of Kentbury, in Berkshire, that the same Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk and Marshal of England, held *XX libratas terre*, by the service and seignieury of Marshal in Hamstede. *Librata terre* is said by some to contain four oxgangs of land, which would make in the whole, fourscore oxgangs of land; or as some say, *librata terre* means land of the yearly value of twenty shillings of lawful money, which would be twenty pounds of the money in those days.

Note, That the Earl Marshal was created about a century afterwards by Richard II. who treated Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, the first Earl Marshal.

It does not appear therefore, that there is any precedent in point, to the present case. But it should seem that this dignity of office of Lord Great Chamberlain, being held of the King's person, as king only, and not annexed to any honour, manor, land or local inheritance whatever, is as much a personal dignity as the Barony of Oxford, which it so long accompanied, though wholly independent of it.

If his Majesty should grant it to the petitioners until Lady Willoughby of Eresby, or Lady Georgina Charlotte Bertie, should have issue capable of holding and exercising it, the intention of the original grant would probably be best answered, and such a grant seems to be most consistent with the dignity of the office.

Mr. *Davenport* displayed a great deal of law learning on the occasion, and contended, that their Lordships could not safely come to a determination till the nature of the tenure had been defined agreeably to the rules of common law; otherwise it would leave room for endless litigations in future times, should their Lordships come to a vote, on a question, so much clouded in doubt and obscurity. On the other hand, as the arguments of counsel in support of the Lady's claim, one time described the honour as descendible to the heir general; the next, as not fit to be exercised by a female; again, it was partible; and as soon as it suited their convenience, they contended it was sole, and could not be divided. Such being the case, as it struck him, he wished most sincerely, as well for the sake of his noble claimants, as from a desire of strict justice, that the nature and conditions of the tenure were previously defined by their Lordships; and then the parties before the House and their counsel, would know how to conduct themselves, and be able to discriminate between the loose opinions hazarded on both sides, and arguments framed on the solid and unerring rules of law in such cases.

Earl Mans-
field.

The counsel being ordered to withdraw, the Earl of *Mansfield* rose, and after observing, that the pleadings were finally closed, said, he had taken some pains in the precedent stage of this important cause, and was happy to recollect that he had a hand in shortening the business, which otherwise must have been extended to a very great length; for so long as the four parties were before the House, each of them would have had a right to reply to the other, and by that means the cause might have been undecided several weeks longer. He hoped that there was another good consequence, that was simplifying the question, and taking the opinion of their Lordships

Lordships on the point of mere positive law, whether Earl Percy and the Duchess Dowager of Athol were barred by the statute of limitations. The Judges were of opinion that the claimants were barred by said statute. Their Lordships therefore had nothing to distract or divert their attention, the only question they were called upon to decide, being simply which of the claimants, Lady Eresby of Willoughby, or the noble Duke who bears the title of Ancaster, were best intitled in the first instance to the office, or if not to the profits of the office, which of them, the noble Duke, or the Lady's husband, Mr. Burrell, were best intitled to be recommended by their Lordships to the King; pending a minority, or till the office shall devolve on some person who may unite the ability of exercising the office with the actual seisin or legal possession thereof.

After making some general observations, his Lordship acquainted the House, that he had framed a question after consulting some great living authorities, to be put to the Judges; which, with their Lordships permission, he would submit to their consideration.—A cry of read! read!

His Lordship then handed the motion to the woolstack, which was conceived in the following terms:

“The late Duke of Ancaster, having died seised of the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, leaving Lady Willoughby of Eresby, and Lady Charlotte Bertie, his sisters and co heirsesses; does the said office belong to the eldest alone, or to both? or, in either case, is the husband of the eldest intitled to hold the said office? or may both sisters execute it by deputy? and how must such deputy be appointed? or does it devolve upon the King to name a proper person to execute the said office during the incapacity of the heirs?”

An order was then moved, that a note of said question be delivered to the Judges, and that they be desired to attend in their places in that House on Friday next, the 25th inst. to deliver their opinion thereon to the House.

May 22.

Private business. No debate.—Adjourned.

May 23.

Public business in course. No motion or debate.—Adjourned to Friday.

M. 3

May 25.

The *Chief Baron*.

The *Chief Baron* after reading the question, framed by Lord Mansfield on Monday, and put by the House in due form, proceeded to take a very extensive view of the question in all its various aspects and relations. He stated the original of the tenure, the implied conditions of the grant, the duties of the office, and its destination, agreeably to the rules of the common law. Upon each of those points he was very full, and in the course of his argument, made it his particular business not only to answer the several arguments made use of at the bar, and stated in the petitioners respective cases, but with remarkable accuracy and precision, laid down the law in relation to descents, where the title of the next successor, nor of the person in possession, could not be affected by any act of either one or both parties. The tenure of Grand Scutage came within that description. it sprang from an agreement made between the Sovereign and the first grantee; and was binding reciprocally on their heirs or successors; so that while on one hand, nothing could defeat the grant of the person first seized, and his lawful successors, but an actual forfeiture arising from the commission of some crime. on the other, all those who were or might succeed him to the office, were bound to hold it in the manner prescribed by the grant.

He then stated the original grant, which he observed was made to a commoner, and traced down the succession to the office regularly to Henry the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, who was the last of that ancient family, who died seized. If any doubt could have remained in his mind, whether the heir general had a preference to the heir male, the determination of that House in the year 1626, in the case of the three claimants, Vere, the nineteenth Earl of Oxford; Lady Derby, heir general to the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, and Lord Willoughby of Eresby, who claimed as heir general to Henry the eighteenth Earl, the person who died last seized. Upon that occasion, after the most full and solemn hearing of all the parties, the Judges gave their opinion, that Lord Willoughby of Eresby, as heir general to the person last seized of the office, namely, Henry the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, that the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, did devolve on said Lord Willoughby of Eresby, as said heir general.

The determination of that day was formed precisely on the rules of law, by which he and his brethren had formed their present opinion. It was formed on the nature of the tenure itself, and of the established rules of descent in cases of

of a similar nature, as in the case of the High Constable, the Marshal, and the Champion of England; in each of which it had been customary, from the earliest grants of those offices, in case of failure of male issue in the person last seised, that the same should devolve on the heir general.

The only two points between the parties now before their Lordships, the noble Duke, and the Lady and her husband, Mr. Burrell, were; whether, when the office devolved upon a woman or an infant, his Majesty might not appoint a person to fill the office till some person who might be legally seised thereof, should be in a capacity to execute it? the other, whether any person under the degree of a Peer, could lawfully execute it?

Both those objections were in his opinion easily answered. The eldest of the two Ladies upon whom the office had by right devolved, was married, and of course none was fitter than her husband; and as to the second, it was enough to observe, that the original grant was made to a Commoner, and that the office was exercised by Sir Thomas de Erpingham, in the reign of Henry IV. whom he presumed acted at that King's coronation as deputy, but who certainly, from the Record, appeared to have assisted as Great Chamberlain at the coronation of that prince.

After several other very learned arguments of the same tendency, he said it was his duty now to deliver the sentiments of his brethren, who were unanimously of opinion:

“That the office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England belongs to both the sisters of Robert, the late Duke of Ancaster, who died seised of said office.

“That the husband of the eldest is not of right entitled to execute it.

“That both sisters may execute it by deputy, to be appointed by them, such deputy not being of a degree inferior to a Knight, and to be approved of by the King.”

As soon as the Chief Baron had delivered the opinion of the Judges, the Earl of *Mansfield* rose, and begged leave to trouble their Lordship's with a few words. He observed that the office was originally given by Henry I. to Aubrey de Vere, whose descendants, the Earls of Oxford, had enjoyed it until the time of Henry VIII. that then it had been given, in consequence of a litigation, to the fifteenth Earl of Oxford, and had, after being in the possession of various persons, till it came into the immediate line of the Ancaster family: that, on the death of the late Duke of Ancaster, his sisters were

his

his co-heirs, and the eldest had applied by petition to his Majesty to be allowed to hold the office, and to appoint a deputy; three other claimants had started up to contest this right with her, and these were the Earl Percy, the Duchess Dowager of Athol, the present Duke of Ancafter, and his brother, Lord Robert Bertie; his Majesty had very properly referred their several claims to that House, for their advice in what manner he should dispose of the Chamberlain's staff; and upon a reference to the learned Judges, whether in the courts below, the claims of Earl Percy and the Duchess Dowager of Athol, would not be barred by the statute of limitation, they had delivered their opinions that they were barred; even if this had not been the case, there were other reasons which, in his mind, would operate powerfully against their claims to this office. Their Lordships would then come down to the case of Lady Willoughby and her sister, and consider what resolution they should adopt upon it. He for his own part coincided entirely with the learned Judges, in the general tenor of the report they had delivered, but was not quite made up in his opinion whether or no a Commoner of any degree could be legally deputed to the exercise of this employment. The only example which had been adduced of its ever being held by any person under the degree of a Peer, was in the instance of Sir Thomas Erpingham. It did not appear, however, from any specific description that was left upon record, that Sir Thomas could fairly be said to have ever held this office as principal at all. He had solicited leave of King Henry IV. to administer water to him upon his coronation; a request which was acquiesced in by his Majesty; and as this was one of the official duties of the Great Chamberlain, an inference had been drawn from this fact, that Sir Thomas must have been at that time in the actual possession of the employment itself. Fourteen years, however, after the period when he had executed this part of the Chamberlain's duty, an occasion arose to describe Sir Thomas with all his true titles and dignities, which description had been transmitted to posterity, and it mentioned him only as the Deputy Great Chamberlain of England. The effect of this single instance was of course destroyed, and the nature of the office was of that kind, the duties of it requiring the holder to accompany the King into that House, and to assume even precedency among their Lordships, that he was strongly disposed to think that the execution of it could not legally be deputed to any one below the rank of Baron.

That,

That, however, would in a considerable degree depend upon the will of his Majesty, whose approbation constituted a necessary essential in the appointment. His Lordship concluded with informing their Lordships that he would propose a motion to them, in reply to the message which had been sent to them by the King; which he said, would consist principally in recommending it to his Majesty to be directed by the opinion which had been delivered upon this subject by the learned Judges.

In the long course of descent, upwards of six hundred years, no instance had occurred in which the office had been claimed by females, except in the case of the Countess of Derby; but that case did not apply here, though the office had in some instances been transmitted by female descent; such being the case of Lord Willoughby of Eresby, son to Lady Willoughby, the first of the Bertie family (who was seized of the office) which Lady Eresby claimed as heir general to her cousin, Henry the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, the last of the Vere family who possessed the office. The only difficulty which now struck him therefore was, how the office could be executed? It certainly could not be executed by a woman, much less by two. The Ladies were consequently to appoint a deputy. It had hitherto been executed by a Peer, except in the single instance of Sir Thomas de Erpingham, and the first grantee, who was certainly of no higher rank than a Commoner; but neither of those precedents came up fully to the point. In a question therefore, which was not clearly or satisfactorily supported by precedent, so as to establish the rule clearly and unequivocally, he presumed it would be more prudent for their Lordships to draw up an address to his Majesty, stating their approbation of the opinion of the Judges, and submitting to his Majesty's wisdom, in what manner, and by whom, said office was to be executed.

A report was drawn in pursuance of his Lordship's motion, nearly in the same terms of the Judges opinion. Agreed to, and ordered to be presented to his Majesty. The House adjourned to Monday the 28.

May 28.

Private business. No debate.

May 29.

Public business in course. No debate.

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As soon as the private business was over, the order of the day being read, for committing the foul-salt bill, Lord *Ld. Dudley*. *Dudley* begged leave to submit to the House a few words which he had to say on that subject. He then in a short speech animadverted on the great importance of the bill then before the House, and viewing it in that light, thought it would be proper to postpone the committing until the first Tuesday after the recess, that their Lordships might have full time to consider the nature of the intended act. His Lordship said, it was very possible he might be deceived as well in the opinion he had formed as the information he had received, in respect to the probable future effects of the bill: He was, however, certain that an immense sum of money at present went out of the kingdom to Spain for that article which the present bill was specially calculated to keep within the kingdom. It was therefore his wish, that their Lordships should fully consider the matter, and for that purpose he moved, that the bill be committed for the first Tuesday after the recess.

Earl Ferris opposed the principle of the bill, which he said was a mere ideal scheme of benefit to the kingdom, with a certainty, in his opinion, of doing an injury to the public. He said that he spoke from experience in the business; and he was confident, neither the bill before their Lordships, nor one of a similar nature, now under consideration in the other House, could in any measure serve the nation. They might, indeed, do a benefit to some individuals; and, the noble Lord said, that he was himself one of those individuals. His Lordship therefore moved, as an amendment to Lord Dudley's motion, that instead of the words, first Tuesday after the recess; it should be inserted, this day three months. The House divided, and the contents went below the bar: among whom were Lord Stourmont, and all the Bishops present. For the amended motion 23; against it 14. Majority 9. The bill therefore was thrown out.

The second order of the day was then read, for committing the bill for preventing the Profanation of the Sabbath-Day, which brought up the Earl of *Abingdon*, who spoke to the following effect:

My Lords, the bill that is now under the contemplation of this House, (the Sunday bill I think it is called) is, in my mind's eye, so truly ridiculous, at the same time it appears so very serious; it partakes so much of tragic-comedy; it so stalks

stalks in buskin, whilst it skips in sock, that really, my Lords, although a member of this House, I know not what part to take; whether to be merry or grave, whether to be silent or speak, and yet to play the mute upon such an occasion, were not only to play the fool with one's self, but to encourage the folly of others.

For, my Lords, taking a view of this bill in its ridiculous light, what is the object? It is neither more nor less than this; to hinder people from walking and from talking on a Sunday night, not because walking and talking on a Sunday night is at present unlawful, but because walking and talking on a Sunday night must be made unlawful for the future; and this seems to be the whole object, scope, and tendency of the bill.

But now, my Lords, let us enquire a little into the grounds and foundation of this bill; and first as to the walking part of it, what is the case there? The case, as I understand it to be, is this.

Sunday being in this country, as in all other Christian countries, the day of *otium cum dignitate*, the day of rest, with the dignity that belongs to that rest; the day when people wash and clean themselves, and, as the saying is, put on their Sunday's best; and there being in this metropolis some, who having so washed and cleaned themselves, and put on their Sunday's best, are willing to enjoy this *otium cum dignitate*, not by walking *al fresco* on a Sunday evening, lest their Sunday's best be spoiled by the rain, but under cover; not "all by the pale light of the moon," but by candle-light, when women and linen are said to look best; I say this being the case, it has been therefore thought proper for the accommodation of this description of persons, that the large and elegant suite of apartments at Castle-House, in Soho-square, should be opened on a Sunday evening, where the refreshments of ices are provided to cool the hot, and tea, coffee, and chocolate, to warm the cold; for it is not pretended that any other refreshments are to be had there; but walking being the *omne quod exit in um* of that place, the thing itself has, *euphoniæ gratia*, obtained the name of Promenade, and this I take to be the whole of the case with respect to the walking part of this bill, the whole of the charge, and the whole of the crime in the thing charged. But, my Lords, if there be, as it appears by this bill that there is, such a degree of criminality in a Promenade on a Sunday evening, it is wonderful to me that this bill has

not extended its clauses to the Promenades of St. James's Park, and of Kensington Gardens; Promenades, where indeed the refreshment of ices, and of coffee, tea, and chocolate, may not be had, but where other refreshments are actually had, and especially on a Sunday evening; such as, for example, the refreshment of reposing one's self on the lap of nature, inasmuch as to make visible that tell tale line of the song, "Green was her gown upon the grass." And as to the sin of walking, there it is had in much greater excess than at Carlisle-House; not to mention that there is less sin in a sin for being under cover, as at Carlisle-House, than for being uncovered, as in St. James's Park and in Kensington Gardens.

I must now wonder too, my Lords, that this bill has not gone a step farther, and taken notice of a late erection in Pall-Mall; an erection, for the outward impurities of which, the newspapers say, the erector (I think he calls himself Dr. Graham) has been already indicted, whilst the inward impurities remain untouched.

But to this wonder I am aware of the arguments in answer. It will be said, that this erection is not intended for use on a Sunday; and, as Milton tells us in his *Comus*, "It is day-light only that makes sin," so in this bill we find that it is Sunday only that makes sin; it is intended for the great, and not for the little; for the aristocracy, and not for the democracy: for us, my Lords, to generate heirs for the nobility, who cannot do so for themselves; and for you, my Lords, the Bishops too, as a paper which I have in my hand will shew; the paper, my Lords, is this:

TEMPLE of HYMEN.

Intelligence extraordinary,

A certain Bishop has so completely exercised the celestial beds, that the evil spirits are expected to depart in a few days. The rooms will be fumigated with brimstone, in order to the well receiving of the would-be celestial. The Doctor has wisely opened his temple *vis-a-vis* to King's Place: that pious seminary is to serve as barracks for young recruits. Colonel Windior, Matthews, and Adams, are to be made staff-officers, and Carotty Kitty is to be drill-serjeant; they will learn their celestial exercise under the Doctor's own inspection, and be cleansed from all impurities! they will then be ready for the divine touch in his heavenly

heavenly temple. N. B. A proper reinforcement of Irish chairmen are in pay to assist in case of emergencies.

Such, my Lords, are the operations of this Temple of Hymen, or, in other words, of this curious house of adultery : but in this there is no sin : for first, these operations are the operations of lying, in which there is no harm, and not of walking, in which there is ; secondly, they are the performances of a week-day, and not of a Sunday ; and thirdly, because we all well know, that what is a sin in the little, is not a sin in the great. As for instance, the Minister being a great man, may by his councils murder our once fellow-subjects in America ; he may rob and plunder the State of its treasure, he may tear up the constitution by the roots. " But Brutus is an honourable man," and Brutus will have a dead majority, and being dead, a corrupt majority in both Houses of Parliament, to support these his honourable measures : whereas a little man, for walking under cover of a Sunday night instead of the open air, is, because a little man, to be put by the same dead and corrupt majority under the rigour and the lash of a penal statute, making that a crime, which in itself is innocence.

But now, my Lords, a word or two for the talking part of this bill, and what is the case here ? Some men, pious men I may say, for aught is shewn to the contrary, fonder of talking than they are of walking, and not choosing to go to bed on a Sunday night without digesting, by reason what they had swallowed in the course of the day as a matter of faith, congregate themselves on a Sunday evening at a place, where paying six-pence a piece for admission, they empty their heads of their metaphysics, and fill their bellies with the value of their six-pence in porter and cheese. An harmless supper this would seem, and not likely to be very offensive in the digestion. But here again, my Lords, if the sin of talking, as of walking, consists in the day and not in the deed, what is the reason that this bill does not extend itself to the Sunday-night clubs about St. James's : as for instance, to Brooke's, where indeed I am not a member, but where, my Lords, as I am told, the members pay more than six-pence a piece for their supper ; and as to talking, Lord, how they do talk ! they talk bawdy, my Lords, and sometimes heterodoxy, but not blasphemy ; no, not so bad as that neither ; but they talk what is worse than all, they talk politics. They abuse the Minister at a great rate ;
they

they say he has ruined the resources, and blasted the national honour of the country.

And shall these be suffered to talk against the state, whilst those are not permitted even to talk upon the affairs of the church! No, no, says the bill, be not mistaken. This is not our *ne plus ultra*, pass me into an act, give me the principle of the bill in a law, suffer me to put down the theologians this session of Parliament, and I will take care of the politicians the next. You shall hear of no more Westminster or other committees: no more associations: no more petitions: the state shall be as much out of the reach of enquiry as the church. The late edict of Russia, forbidding the Russians to talk over the affairs of the state, shall become, like this, an act of the English Parliament, forbidding Englishmen to talk about the affairs of the church; which leads me, my Lords, to take a view of this bill in its serious light; and as in its ridiculous light I might say, *risum tenatis amici*? I might add, "*Quis talia fando, temperet a lacrymis*?" For, my Lords, shall a free body possess a free mind? Shall not Englishmen be suffered to find his own way to heaven! Shall he not dispute? shall he not debate? shall he not debate? shall he not doubt of? shall he not comment upon that which is to be or not to be the means of his eternal salvation? How is fire to be drawn from the flint but by collision? And how is truth to be known but by discussion? Shall he not measure his faith of the trinity by the rule of his reason? And shall not a protester against the errors of the church of Rome, examine whether Protestantism or Popery is most congenial to the freedom of the state in which he lives? For these it seems are the theses against which the thunder of this bill is levied.

But it is said, the Universities are at the bottom of this bill; it was brought into the House of Commons by one of the representatives of one University, and seconded by another representative of the other; and therefore,

"What learning dictates reason must obey."

But, my Lords, this is no argument with me; for we all know, that to hold men in ignorance is sometimes the business of learning; and therefore, although I have the highest respect for the learning of the Universities, all is not gospel with me that comes from them; if it were, educated where I was in one of them, I ought to entertain principles very different from those I profess. With respect to one part of this bill, however, I mean the walking part of it, possibly

the Universities might have conceived it a fit object of regulation; for being devoted to the study of the dead languages, and not so conversant with the living, they might have supposed that the term Promenade meant something more than it really does, that it was the mere covering only of original sin; and therefore ought to be suppressed; but as to the talking part of the bill, in this they could not be mistaken. This came within the pale of their own knowledge; and here, my Lords, "*latet anguis in herba*;" here it is that one sees the cloven foot peeping from under the caslock. Under the pretence of profanation, enquiry is to be stopped, and truth to be suppressed. The unlearned are not to examine, lest they become learned. Truth lies in a well, and the clergy are to be the only buckets to supply us therewith. This, so far as it goes, is the principle of this bill, a principle as subversive of religious, as it may be made instrumentally so of civil liberty; a principle as repugnant to the free constitution of this country as it is to the laws of our nature.

And, therefore, as Mr. Locke tells us, "No man is bound to obey the legislature, but according to the trust put in it." So, according to this just and fundamental principle of Mr. Locke, this bill should not pass into a law. No positive law can suppress the laws of nature; nor is any act of Parliament binding, which is to take from Englishmen the rights of Englishmen; that is to say, the rights of the constitution.

My Lords, I shall give my hearty negative to the bill, for the sake of its folly as well as its wickedness.

The Bishop of *Chester* got up, and said that the noble Lord's speech was so indecent and so very repugnant to the dignity of the House, that he thought it unworthy a reply. The learned Prelate observed, that he did intend, if any thing serious was advanced, to answer it, but in the present case, he left the noble Earl's arguments, if they could be called so, to their own demerits; for merits they had none.

The Duke of *Manchester* quoted a number of statutes, in which many penal laws were enacted to prevent the profanation of the Lord's day; statutes which, his Grace said, if put in force, would have answered every honest purpose of the present bill. His Grace spoke very seriously on its religious tendency, and seemed to think, that however high the authority of the pulpit might be held, yet mankind were never to be convinced of religious assertions without the benefit of reply

was allowed, and that one neighbour had the liberty of conversing with another on the subject of that faith by which he was to be saved. His Grace farther observed, that although he was an enemy to dissipation and immorality, and although he never had been at the Promenade, yet he still considered both the places of religious debate, and of Sunday walking and drinking tea; perfectly innocent. He therefore wished, that the bill might be got rid of in as decent a manner as possible, and that another on a more liberal plan might be framed, to which he would give his most hearty concurrence.

The Bishop
of Chester.

The Bishop of *Chester* said, that the noble Duke's speech demanded and was entitled to serious reply. He therefore informed their Lordships, that he apprehended the noble Duke to be mistaken in his idea respecting the nature of the bill: For it was only meant to prevent that irreligion which our Protestant ancestors abhorred, but the laws to effect which were found inadequate to the purpose. He said, that instead of this favouring of popish persecution it was levelled at popish customs; France, and other countries of the same religion, tolerated from the principles of that religion, plays, opera, and other pastimes on the Lord's-day. But the Protestant religion, founded on the Protestant constitution and our clearest rights, did not permit that profanation, and therefore every law to serve that purpose must be truly constitutional. The learned Pileate averred, that the places of public debate were supported not for the purpose of serving religion, but for the pecuniary advantage of the proprietors; and that the people who spoke there were paid a weekly stipend, for the purpose of drawing others to the house. This, he said, he averred from the best information; and that he had also the highest law-authorities, as well as information from the Justices, that there were not now any act in force, to prevent that profanation of the Lord's day, which the present bill meant to provide against.

The question was then put, whether the bill should be committed, and the House divided. Contents 29; non-contents 3. Majority 26.

The bill was ordered to be committed the first Tuesday after the recess.

The report on the bill, for making an exchange of hands between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Radnor was received; and a motion being made that said report be now received, the *Lord Chancellor* came from the woolstack, and made a long and very able speech against agreeing

The Lord
Chancellor.

ing with said report, in which he confined himself to two special points, the necessity of the most full and correct specification of the lands to be commuted or interchanged; and that the equivalents on both sides be such, as to satisfy the whole world, who might think fit to enquire, that what was received was equal to what was parted with.—This was necessary, in every bill, for a change or barter of property; but it became doubly so, when the patrimony of the Church was concerned; because, the person in possession, had but a life or transient estate in the property, which he changed.

He was well satisfied, in his own mind, that the most reverend Prelate, who was one of the contracting parties to the present proposed agreement, would be as careful and as anxious for the preservation of those interests committed to his care and guardianship as if the property was vested in himself, so as to enable him to devise, or otherwise dispose of the same; but it was the example, not the particular bill under consideration, which chiefly induced him to rise to oppose it:—because, it would establish a precedent, and a precedent the more dangerous, as it would have the sanction of the highest authority in the Church.

His Lordship next proceeded to descant upon the bill itself; pointing out in a variety of instances its defects, particularly that want of compactness, necessary where the value of landed property was to be fairly and equitably ascertained.

A short conversation arose between his Lordship, the most reverend Prelate, and the Earl of Radnor; which ended in a mutual agreement, that said bill be recommended for the first day after the recess.

The House rose at seven o'clock, and adjourned to Tuesday sevensnight, the 12th of June.

June 12.

This day the House met pursuant to their adjournment, previous to the Whitsun recess, and proceeded to the dispatch of business.

Counsel were called to the bar, to be heard in behalf of T. Fleming, esq. claiming the title of Earl of Wigton, in Scotland.

Several witnesses were called, to prove the facts stated by the petitioner's counsel. The evidence was to the following purport.

VOL. I.

R 1

That

That the late Earl of Wigton was a native of Ireland; but on the death of the preceding Earl he laid claim to the peerage, which was admitted; that, in consequence thereof, he assumed the title and arms, and was publicly received in both kingdoms as Earl of Wigton; that he walked at the coronation as a Peer of Scotland, and had a stipend from Government, to enable him to support his rank.

The registers of this branch of the family, settled in Ireland, were produced; by the first, as well as articles of intermarriage, it appeared, that the ancestor of the late Earl, who first settled in Ireland, was a younger brother of the then Earl of Wigton. The Register likewise proved, that the present claimant was the eldest, and only surviving son of the late Earl.

Several other collateral proofs were offered, and a depository of old writings produced, by a female relation of the family, which served to corroborate and confirm several of the foregoing facts.

The Lord Chancellor and Earl Mansfield asked some questions, relative to farther proofs of the authenticity of the papers, which the counsel not agent did not seem prepared to answer.

The *Solicitor Genl* of Scotland.

The *Solicitor Genl* of Scotland, who was counsel against the claimant, said, that the session was so far advanced, that he feared he should not receive all the necessary documents from his client time enough to make out his case between this and the prorogation.

After a short consultation at the table, the farther hearing was adjourned *sine die*; and the claimant's case it was settled should be taken up *de novo* the ensuing session. Adjourned.

June 13.

Private and public business, in course. No debate.

June 14.

The Bp. of St. David's.

The private business being finished, the Bishop of St. David's moved, that the House do resolve itself into a committee, to take the Sunday-bill into consideration.

The Earl of Arundel.

The Earl of Arundel rose, and addressed their Lordships to the following effect:

My Lords,

Having already delivered my sentiments to the House upon the subject matter of this bill, it is not my intention

. to

to trouble your Lordships with any repetition of them; but, at the same time that I say this, I must take the liberty of adding, that I can by no means suffer this bill to pass through this House, without, in every stage of it, repeating my opposition and giving my negative to it. In the present moment then, I rise to object to its commitment; and this I do, my Lords, not in consequence of the arguments that have been offered against the bill, but in consequence of the want of argument that has been had in the support of it.

In objecting to this bill, upon the former occasion alluded to, I treated it as I thought it deserved; I treated it ludicrously, I treated it with gravity: I treated it ludicrously, for "ridicule (says my Lord Shaftesbury) is the test of truth." I treated it with gravity, that it might meet the gravity of the House: but having failed in that positive mode of attack, this negative kind of opposition may now possibly prove more effectual.

I say, my Lords, having failed, for the right reverend Prelate, who has adopted this spurious offspring, and means to legitimate it, by confounding the gravity of my arguments with the ridicule of them, and, by a curious kind of logic suited to the purpose, not only triumphed in his conclusions of giving no answer either to the one or the other, but had reason to triumph too in the majority which he obtained on the occasion. Indeed, knowing the high consequence of that right reverend Prelate, as well as the high opinion he entertains of himself, I expected nothing other than this from him: but the right reverend Prelate will give me leave to tell him, however he may boast of his victory within these walls, he will find his victory without these walls pretty much like the late victory of Lord Cornwallis in America: a victory that has ended in a retreat, and in the publication of a ridiculous proclamation (like this bill) which nobody minds, which nobody reads, and which every body holds in contempt.

But, my Lords, although it was not in my power to call up the right reverend Prelate to deliver his adopted child out of the hands either of ridicule or gravity, it gave me much pleasure to find, that the House was not deprived of hearing what the right reverend Prelate had to say in behalf of this adoption; for being called up by what fell from a noble Duke, [Manchester] he was then pleased to state what he had to offer in support of this bill, and it is to the paucity and

futility of the arguments that were then adduced by the right reverend Prelate himself, that I now rest my opposition to the farther proceeding upon this bill. What those arguments were, their recency renders it unnecessary for me to state. But, why do I call them arguments? I will appeal to the House whether any thing, that was said by the right reverend Prelate, had the shadow or colour of argument in it; or, if it had, whether it was not in direct opposition to the bill. The right reverend Prelate said, that in Roman Catholic countries, plays, operas, and other pastimes were admitted on a Sunday; but in Protestant countries they were not. But for what reason are they not to be admitted in Protestant countries? Does the right reverend Prelate know the wisdom and the policy of that measure? Does he not know, that the first and fundamental object of all government is, or ought to be, that the people of that government should be rightly employed? How much better is it, therefore, that people should be suffered to come together on a Sunday evening, under the eye and policy of their government, to be amused by entertainments, in which there is no moral turpitude, than to be left to go a whoring after their own imaginations, and in the commission of acts, which are not only *contra bonos mores*, but which neither the eye, nor policy of any government, can remedy or prevent. Another thing the right reverend Prelate said, was, that he had the highest law authorities to assert, that there was no law in force to prevent that which this act meant to provide against. Can there be a more decided argument against this bill? Will any law authority say, will his Majesty's Solicitor-General, the Representative of the University of Cambridge, say, that if these were disorderly meetings, that if any thing occurred at them, which was contrary to the peace and good order of society, that there are not laws in being, and laws in abundance too, in every respect full and sufficient not only to punish the offence, but to remedy the evil? What does the bill itself say? It says, that the Ecclesiastical Courts have themselves power to punish these offences, and provides, that this jurisdiction should not be altered or abridged by the passing of this bill into an act. What then is the obvious purpose of this bill? It is to make that a crime, which is at present neither *malum prohibitum*, nor *malum in se*, and to furnish punishments for offences, for which, if offences, it is admitted, punishments are already to be had.

Upon

Upon the whole, my Lords, for what the right reverend Prelate has said, as well for what he has not said, I trust, if there were no other reasons, your Lordships will be of opinion, that as this bill does not merit, so it will not have, any farther the countenance and sanction of this House.

Before I sit down, my Lords, I will add one word more, as from myself, in argument against this bill: I have before taken notice of this bill in its ridiculous and in its serious light; but there is another light in which I wish to view it, and that is, in its hypocritical light. When I see that right reverend Prelate, and almost the whole of that right reverend Bench, voting for putting tomahawks and scalping-knives into the hands of savages, to perpetrate murder in its horridest extreme; when I see them (Protestant bishops,) voting for crucifixes to perpetuate and establish Popery in America, in order that Popery may establish despotism in the Crown; when I see them all blessing his Majesty, and in their address not only assisting the war with America to be just and necessary, but, (as a species of peace-offering, acceptable enough to the king of men, but from them, as ministris of the gospel, not quite so acceptable to the King of kings,) "praising God for every victory that has a tendency to the blessings of peace;" praising God for the shedding of human blood; for such is the object of their prayer: I say, my Lords, when I see these things, what must I think of this bill? What must I think of it, but as a measure intended to throw dust into the eyes of the people; as calculated to draw off the public attention from those that are above, and place it on those that are below, to make the world believe, that the sin is not in them, but that the wickedness lieth in the people: that the shepherds would save their flock, but that their flock will not be saved: that they are busied in good works, in their watchfulness and care over the morality, the virtue, and religion of the state; when at the same time they are on the contrary employed in upholding, maintaining, and supporting, with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might, the most corrupt, the most profligate, and the most abandoned administration, that ever cursed the Government of this or any other country upon the face of God's earth.

Such, my Lords, in my view of this bill, and such my ideas upon this subject, and now I have but a single word more to add. When that right reverend bench will pull out the

the beams that are in their own eyes, that they may see more clearly the mote that are in their brethrens, they will steadfastly meet with my support; until then, my Lords, my honour calls upon me to be, and to remain their firm determined opponent.

Bishop of
St. David's

The Bishop of *St. David* replied, by observing, that, if his Lordship had said any thing new, or had treated the subject with a becoming degree of gravity and seriousness, he would have endeavoured to have given him an answer; but as no new arguments had been advanced by his Lordship, he should not take up the time of the House in answering them, and especially as they were of too ludicrous a kind to deserve an answer from a member of that House.

The Lord Chancellor now quitted the woolfack, and the bill being sent to a committee, Lord Sandys, as chairman of it, went to the table, when

Earl of
Abingdon

The Earl of *Abingdon* rose a second time, and said, your Lordships having thought fit to send this bill to a committee, my next struggle must be, as I cannot do away its wickedness, to lessen, if possible, for the honour of this House, the degree of its folly, and therefore my Lords, in order to this, I shall beg leave to trouble your Lordships with one or two amendments.

The first amendment, my Lords, is of the title-page of the bill; which being "A Bill for preventing certain abuses and profanations on the Lord's-day, called Sunday;" I would wish, after the word "profanations," to insert the words (as well) and after the word Sunday, to add the following words, (as on the other days of the week), and then the title will run thus: "A Bill for preventing certain abuses and profanations, as well on the Lord's-day, called Sunday, as on the other days of the week." And to this amendment, my Lords, I am led by the preamble of the bill itself; for it is there said, that "Debates having frequently been held on the evening of the Lord's-day, concerning divers texts of holy scripture, by persons unlearned and incompetent to explain the same, to the corruption of good morals, and to the great encouragement of irreligion and profaneness;" and therefore, my Lords, if this be true that debates held on the evening of the Lord's day (as described) are to the corruption of good morals, and to the great encouragement of irreligion and profaneness, debates (of the same description) held on any other evening, must necessarily produce the same effects; and if the same effects are produced on any other evening,

evening, as well as on a Sunday evening, it is equally incumbent upon us to remedy those effects; and if it be equally incumbent upon us to remedy those evils, it follows according to the rules of sound reason, as well as of sound logic, that my amendment stands without objection. Possibly indeed, it may be said, knowing the power of the legislature to pass an act for every day in the week, when the occasions shall call for it, and how easy a thing it is to multiply laws, that this law may prevent the other six from being enacted; but in answer to this, I am to inform your Lordships (as I am instructed), that these profaners, determined upon their profanations, and to evade this act, have already agreed upon Monday instead of Sunday evening to hold their future meetings; and therefore, my Lords, that we might not be outwitted by these sinners, I hold it best that we should prevent them at once, and by this bill, from debating upon any subject whatsoever (as the bill now enacts) upon any day whatsoever, and by this means give them a proof that we have at least as much wit as they have.

With respect, my Lords, to the debates of these men upon the alteration of their meeting from Sunday evening to Monday evening, they were so curious, that I cannot help giving your Lordships some account of them. It was first of all moved, that Saturday evening should be the time of meeting, instead of Sunday; and in support of this time, in preference to any other, it was argued, that the next day being Sunday, when it was not necessary for them to go to work, they could not only lie in bed all the day, and rest themselves, but by so doing, spite the Bench of Bishops by not going to church. To this it was answered, that Saturday being the Jews' sabbath, and the Jews being rich, and the state poor, the Jews might give the Minister a sum of money to prevent this meeting on Saturday evening, as had been done on Sunday; but here in reply it was argued, that the Jews being rich, and the state poor, when the Minister wanted the money of the Jews, he would take it as he had done the money of the East-India Company, by the omnipotence of an act of Parliament, and without any agreement at all; which removing the objection to Saturday evening, it was then contended by way of rejoinder, that Saturday evening was, according to the books of *Dæmonomania*, (books which the right reverend Prelates are no doubt acquainted with) the sabbath of the witches; that these witches, to prepare themselves for this meeting, take certain soporific drugs,

drugs, that then the devil appeared before them in the form of a goat, around which they make several dances and magic ceremonies, and afterwards fly away up the chimney upon a switch; and this it seems, my Lords, put the company in such a fright, that they all, *una voce*, agreed to change their meeting from Saturday evening to Monday evening. I hope, my Lords, I have said enough to induce your Lordships to adopt the amendment I have proposed; and if so, the next amendment will of course be, that the words "or upon any day whatsoever" be ~~made~~ follow after the word "Sunday," in the first enacting clause, and whenever else they may be required.

Earl of
Abingdon.

The foregoing amendments were read in their order by the Chairman, and negatived; when the Earl of *Abingdon* rose again, and said, my Lords, my amendments being rejected, I have now an entire clause to propose, a clause of proviso, and it is this:

"Provided also, that this act does not extend, nor be construed to extend to Quakers' Meetings on a Sunday evening, inasmuch as these meetings being silent meetings, they cannot in any sense be said to fall under the meaning and intention of this act."

This clause being also negatived, the bill was committed; and ordered to be read a third time.

The order of the day being read, for receiving the report of the committee on the bill for inclosing the parish of Kington, in the county of Worcester, and the several amendments agreed to in the committee being read,

The Lord
President.

The *Lord President* stated to the House the particular effect of the clause relative to tythes, as altered by the amendment; and after explaining in what particulars it had hitherto been held advisable to provide for the clergy in cases of inclosure, said he must object to the amendment of the committee, since it effectually overthrew the clause, as it stood before the bill was committed.

Bishop of
St. David's.

The *Bishop of St. David's* began with observing, that he was present at the committee when the bill was considered; and though one of the amendments which he proposed had been adopted, yet as he had several others to make, which he thought equally necessary; and as the Lords of the committee were not pleased to accept them, he was obliged now to trouble the House.

The learned Prelate then went very largely into the whole system of tything; of compensations in lieu of tythes; of the

the nature of compensations and commutations in general ; and read a string of resolutions, which he would recommend in future to be inserted in all inclosing bills, in order to ensure to the rector and vicar the real value of his tythes, to defend him against the oppressions of the lord of the manor, land-owners, &c. and to prevent the incumbent, for the time being, from entering into any fraudulent bargain which might prejudice his eventual successor.

He then observed, that he had stated the substance of the amendments, which he hoped to have an opportunity of proposing. He confessed that many of these clauses were new, and different from the clauses which had been hitherto inserted in bills of this kind, but how expedient and how highly necessary they all were, his Lordship said, would soon be made to appear in the clearest and ablest manner.

He concluded with observing, that as nothing was intended by these amendments, but to provide that equal justice was done to all parties, and to take care, that as much was given to a man in one way, as was taken from him in another, he could entertain no doubt but that their Lordships, as friends to justice, would agree with him in ordering the bill to be recommitted.

Lord *Sandys* said a few words in reply, and particularly *Ld. Sandys*. with regard to the clause, the reverend Prelate had declared his intention to move to have inserted, which gave the clergyman a right to appeal from the decision of the Commissioners, appointed by the act to settle the compensation to be made to him in lieu of tythes. His Lordship said, that clause would terrify persons in the country, and frighten them from inclosing ; for who would choose to have a suit of law hanging perpetually over his head.

The *Lord Chancellor* rose, and observed, the argument he *The Lord Chancellor* had always heard in that House and elsewhere was, that it was right to make the value of the tythes up to the clergyman by a commutation either of land, a corn-rent, or in some other way. With regard to a corn-rent, his Lordship stated that to be, in his opinion, the fairest commutation that could possibly be adopted. Commutation of land for tythes he did not so much admire, because in that case three parts of every parcel of land inclosed, nay in some four or even five, in proportion to the state of culture, must, in order to make a fair and equitable commutation, go to the minister and rest in mortmain, by which means, in length

of time, a great proportion of the kingdom would be in mortmain. His Lordship said, what had been stated to the House by the noble Earl who opened the debate, relative to the amended clause, was the strongest argument for the recommitment of the bill that could possibly be adduced; for the noble Earl had expressly stated that the clause did not give the clergyman a fair commutation, but merely calculated what the tythes were worth hitherto, and upon that, and that only, made him up a something in lieu of them. This was in itself so unjust, that he was persuaded the House would not suffer it to pass in that form.

Lord
Sandwich.

Lord *Sandwich* said, notwithstanding he had the misfortune to differ from the first authorities, and from men to whom he looked up with admiration, yet with regard to inclosure bills, he could not give up his opinion. What that was the House well knew, for he had delivered it on a former occasion. He had since that time examined his own mind, in order to see if he could find any fallacy in the ideas upon which his opinion rested, and he found none. He had also since that time conversed with a great variety of persons upon the subject, and they had all agreed with him, that the easiest, the most certain, and satisfactory compensation for tythes, was that which had been adopted in almost every inclosure bill that had passed both Houses of Parliament, viz. commutation of land. So perfectly convinced was he of this, that not all the eloquence nor all the abilities of the most powerful orators could induce him to change his opinion. There had now, his Lordship said, been near nine hundred inclosure bills passed, in every one of which almost commutation of land was the mode adopted, and he had never heard the least complaint whatever; he wondered therefore to what new formed opinion, to what sudden impulse of zeal, these attempts at innovation were to be imputed. He must and would resist them whenever they were made. He professed himself a friend to inclosure bills; those that had passed he was confident had been of essential service to the public; and so satisfied was he, that the more inclosure bills the better, that as far as his poor abilities would enable him, he would support every inclosure bill that should be brought into the House. His Lordship, speaking of tythes, said, their being abolished gave peace and happiness to the country; and as to corn-rents, they made persons estates appear larger than they really were; whereas commutation by land settled the matter at once.

His

His Lordship concluded with objecting to the recommitment of the bill.

The *Lord Chancellor* replied, that nothing could be more *The Lord Chancellor.* unfortunate for the cause of justice, than when a proposition was objected to, for those who opposed it, instead of meeting it fairly in a direct and manly way, to draw in a number of topics extraneous to the subject matter, and in a general stile of reasoning to call the attention of the House to those foreign topics. Such he observed was the noble Earl's mode of debating the present question, which was not whether the tythes of the parson should be compensated for by a commutation of land, or a corn-rent, but whether the compensation held out by the bill, a compensation founded on a calculation, *a retro*, was the sort of compensation which their Lordships would hold to be adequate to the case in question. In arguing this point, he appealed to the House, whether saying "I am a friend to inclosure bills, and I will support them," had any, the smallest reference whatever to the subject? Just the same sort of reasoning it was, for the noble Earl to say, respecting the commutation of tythes for land, that he had never heard of any complaint, although nine hundred inclosure bills had passed, and most of them in that way. To this, would it not be an apposite answer, and just as good reasoning for him to say, he had heard a great number of complaints, which he undoubtedly had? One thing, his Lordship said, he must desire of those who thought differently from what he did on this or any other subject; and that was, not to suggest that some new zeal, some spirit of innovation or other, had suddenly seized him. The sole consideration that weighed in his mind was, whether what he aimed at was right, and consonant with strict justice. In many of their inclosure bills then Lordships had from inattention suffered what was wrong to pass, and in consequence the parties had not been done justice to, which they had a right to expect from Parliament.

His Lordship stated a variety of amendments, which he proposed to offer for the better regulation of future inclosure bills. In particular, he objected to the mode of settlement of the claim of the minister by three commissioners: he thanked God that the property of an Englishman depended not on so loose a tribunal in any other instance whatever. His Lordship exposed the inequitable constitution of this tribunal by stating, that out of a pretence to do the parson justice he had the nomination of one commissioner,

but at the same time the other parties named two, so that in fact the Minister might as well have no nomination at all. As a proof of the iniquity practised in some cases, his Lordship stated to the House an instance or two that had fallen within his own knowledge. The means of prevention that he should propose, were these: to oblige the commissioners to take down their examinations and proceedings in writing, in order that the party aggrieved might render them subject to revival before a better and more competent jurisdiction. To oblige them also to receive the testimony of such witnesses as the respective parties should tender, and to take down their depositions in writing, and upon oath. If either of the parties afterwards thought himself aggrieved, to re-examine the whole matter, and to state the re-examination in writing and upon oath, in like manner as before; and then to super-add a right of appeal. As the act stood, he conceived there was an appeal to the Quarter Session. When the Quarter Session was alluded to, his Lordship remarked, it was no unusual thing to hear, that in a particular part of the country, where this and that noble Lord lived, the gentlemen who came to the Quarter Session were such and such; persons so respectable, of characters so known and established, that they were superior to reproach. All this, his Lordship said, might be, and he did not doubt was strictly true in various instances, but he meant to lay the whole consideration of personal character out of the question, and to speak to the constitution of Quarter Sessions in general, rather than to make the least reference to individuals, either respectable or otherwise. Quarter Sessions were not the sort of jurisdiction fit to try appeals of the nature under consideration, from the short time of their sitting, and from various other objections. But then, as a great piece of wit, it had been thought a mighty good turn upon him to say, "What, would you take them into Westminster-Hall!" He begged to know why not? Did their Lordships think his Majesty's courts of law unfit to hear such appeals. Those courts, where the parties could be told from authority how the law stood! Those courts, who could direct such issues as might appear necessary to be tried! But then it had been said, "Going into Westminster-Hall is expensive; you will terrify the people from enclosures," Indeed! did the noble Lords, who used these arguments,

arguments, know, that the expence of going into Westminster-Hall was so trifling on such appeals, that it would cost the parties no more than appealing to the Quarter Sessions? And then in order that frivolous and captious suits might not be brought there, he intended to make the appellants, if they failed in their appeal, liable to double costs; a circumstance which would effectually put a stop to slight, idle, and ill-founded appeals.

After going through a variety of regulations, which his Lordship said he should propose, he at length came back to the consideration of the bill itself. Its principle he admitted to be right, that was on all hands agreed; what he wanted was, to make the clauses come up to the principle, which in their present form, he contended they did not. His Lordship having argued this for some time said, if he failed then, he would try again and again, for as long as he lived he would never consent to a bill passing imperfect as that bill was. He knew the day would come, sooner or later, when their Lordships would agree with him upon the point in question, and he did assure them, all he laboured at was to render their legislative proceedings as pure and as just in every respect as every one of their Lordships were determined their judicial proceedings should be; in fact, he wanted to make their purity at a House of Parliament equal to their high authority.

Lord *Dudley* said, he must object to the re-commitment; but he did assure the noble Lord he did not mean to be witty at the expence of Westminster Hall. He had no talents for wit, and if he had been blessed with any, he should not have ventured to have employed them against the ability of those who so laudably filled the seat of justice in Westminster-Hall. His Lordship declared himself of the same opinion with his noble friend [Lord Sandwich]; he was a friend to inclosures, and to commutation of land in lieu of tithes. With regard to what the learned Lord had said of the commissioners injustice, he could only declare, that in the country where he lived the commissioners had always given satisfaction. They were men of character, and men universally respected. He proved that there was no appeal to the Quarter Sessions in the bill; and after several arguments in support of the bill, asked if any one of their Lordships went into Westminster-Hall, whether he did not find it pretty expensive to come out again? Besides (added his Lordship) Westminster-Hall is not the end of the evil;
if

“If these appellants go there, in all probability they must come here, and appear by their counsel at your Lordships’ bar.” [The Lord Chancellor said from the woolfack, no, no; but the Lord President and Lord Loughborough, sitting by Lord Dudley, one of them said yes.] His Lordship said, he knew not whether he was in the right or not; great authorities were divided in opinion.

*The Lord
Chancellor.*

The *Lord Chancellor* observed, that the argument against the recommitment turned out exactly as he foretold. He had been answered as to one immaterial point, while all the rest of his argument, those parts which came nearest to the question, were suffered to pass unnoticed. He cautioned the House against accustoming themselves to hear strong objections, and without having heard them obviated, to make up their minds to vote decisively. From one point laid down by the noble Lord it was evident, that justice as well as reason rendered the re-commitment of the bill indispensably necessary. There was, it seemed, and he owned it had escaped him before, no appeal whatever in the bill. He conjured the House therefore, for their own honour, to make one; or if they would not consent to that, at least to oblige the commissioners to take down the examinations in writing, that their proceedings might be capable of being subject to a revision, and that the party who thought himself aggrieved by their decision, might shew them the written evidence of their own acts, and be enabled to say to them, “thus hast thou done!”

Ld. Sandys. Lord *Sandys* mentioned a few words on the general idea of there being no appeal from commissioners. His Lordship instanced the commissioners of the land-tax. At length the House divided. Contents for the commitment 4; non-contents 24. Majority 20.

The minority was composed of the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Galloway, and the Bishops of Lincoln and St. David’s.

June 15.

The bill for preventing the profanation of the Lord’s-day was read a third time, and passed.

The petition of Colonel Twissleton, claiming the barony of Say and Sele, as heir-general to the person first seized of that honour, was, upon motion, ordered to be deferred till Thursday, the 21st instant.

Much

Much public business in course, but no debate.—Their Lordships adjourned to Monday.

June 18.

The order of the day for the second reading of the Isle of Man Bill, being moved for, the Lord Chancellor observed, that in order to expedite the business before the counsel were called in, it would be necessary that their Lordships should know whether the objections meant to be urged against the principle of it, or only against particular clauses; because, if not against the principle, the bill might be read a second time, and immediately committed; whereas, if against the principle, the proper stage to oppose it would be in the order of the day for reading it a second time.

The counsel against the bill were then called in, and having declared it was against the clauses, not the principle, they meant to object, the bill was then read a second time; and immediately after the House resolved itself into a committee thereon.

Mr. *Bearcroft*, as counsel against the bill, entered into a very learned argument, stating his objection against the several clauses.

To prove some of the material facts on which his arguments were founded, he called several witnesses; among others, a Mr. *Lutwyche*, the collector appointed by the Crown in 1765. The purport of his evidence was, to shew that the present bill would infringe upon several of the rights and privileges vested in the Crown, by the act which passed in 1765, for giving the late Duke of Athol and his Duchess a compensation for the sovereignty of that island.

He was interrogated by several noble Lords, particularly the Lord Chancellor, Lords Mansfield and Temple, and the Duke of Athol.

At length the House was resumed. The Chairman ordered to report the progress, and the committee adjourned to Friday next.

June 19.

As soon as the private business was over, the Duke of *Richmond* rose, and after explaining the material parts of the petition which he held in his hand, begged permission to present a petition from the American prisoners, in Mill-House prison, complaining of their being deprived of a proper allowance of bread, clothing, &c.

The

The petition was accordingly received, and being read at the table, purported that the petitioners were allowed only one pound of bread a day, while the French, Spanish, and Dutch were allowed a pound and a half, within the same period; and concluded with praying for a larger allowance of bread, and for a more regular supply of clothes and other necessaries.

The usual forms being thus complied with, his Grace said, he wished to call their Lordships attention to this business; for though not a subject of the first consequence, it was one in which their Lordship's humanity was deeply interested; he would add more, the principle of humanity might be still farther extended. The men who had fought our battles by land and sea, might feel in turn all those ills the petitioners complained of, and though retaliation upon individuals, who could be supposed to have no hand in those acts of severity and oppression, was infinitely cruel and unjust; yet so it happened, that the poor prisoner was often made to experience in his own person those ills which was inflicted upon him, on account of the presumed oppression or misconduct of government.

His Grace, after this short prefatory discourse, moved, that the petition do lie on the table. This being agreed to, his Grace moved, that said petition be referred to a committee of the whole House, on Monday se'nnight.

He could not sit down, he said, without making one observation. He thought it necessary that some of the servants of the Crown should rise, and state to the House whether the principal fact stated in the petition, namely, that the Americans received but one pound of bread a day, while the French, Spanish, and Dutch prisoners received a pound and an half, was or was not true? because if the fact was denied, it would be necessary to move, that the commissioners of hurt and sick seamen do attend to give evidence. On the other hand, if the fact was admitted, the committee might proceed immediately, on the day appointed, to take the contents of the petition into consideration.

Earl of
Sandwich.

The Earl of *Sandwich* said, he entered the House wholly unprepared to speak with any confidence on the subject, but, he assured the noble Duke, he made no doubt but he should be able to give him and the House every satisfaction they wanted.

All he was at present prepared to say, was, that the American prisoners stood upon a very different footing with those
of

of France, Spain, and Holland; the latter being deemed prisoners of war, according to the established law of nations; the former being deemed criminals, found in arms against their lawful sovereign.

His Lordship concluded, with expressing an earnest desire, that the matter should be brought before the House, and fairly and fully discussed; and as the noble Duke had intimated a wish or intention of moving for the attendance of the commissioners of Sick and Hurt, in order to be examined as to the truth of the allegations, set forth in the petition, he hoped the noble Duke would follow what he had already done, by moving for their attendance.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, he was well pleased to find, ^{Duke of Richmond,} that the noble Earl was so willing to forward the enquiry, and he should cheerfully adopt his Lordship's recommendation, in moving for the attendance of the commissioners of sick and hurt.

As to some of the observations which had fallen from the noble Earl, now was not the time to enter into the discussion of the merits how far the Americans were entitled to be treated on the foot of prisoners of war. The committee was the proper place, and as such he should reserve whatever he had to say on the subject till the question came before their Lordships, accompanied with all the circumstances and facts necessary to enable the House to come to a satisfactory and equitable decision.

His Grace moved for the attendance of the commissioners, agreeably to the wish expressed by the noble Earl; which being agreed to, the House adjourned.

June 20.

Private business being finished, the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a committee on the Almanac-duty bill, Lord Sands was called to the chair.

His Lordship read several of the clauses, which were agreed to, till he came to that by which any person who shall vend or expose to sale an almanac without a stamp, or on which the stamp or impression shall be plainly made, if convicted, shall be liable to a penalty of ten pounds.

The *Lord Chancellor* wished, that those intrusted with the ^{Lord Chancellor} drawing up of bills, were either more careful or better instructed. The clause struck him as directly contradictory; for while it neglected, according as the clause was worded, to enable the prosecutor to recover the penalty, where there was

no stamp, it punished the vender for complying with the very principle of the bill, that of raising a certain sum of money by a stamp duty.

Earl Bathurst.

Earl Bathurst rose to explain. He said various frauds had been practised, with regard to the printing and selling of almanacs; among others, it had been a practice so to contrive to print a sheet almanac that it could be cut into pieces and made up in the form of a book; another was, printing them upon blank paper, and cutting out the stamps of an old almanac, and affixing them thereto. The present clause to defeat both species of fraud, ordained that the almanacs should be so printed, as that ~~part of~~ the printing should appear on the stamp, which would in his apprehension effectually prevent the annexing an old stamp to a new almanac.

Lord Chancellor.

The Lord Chancellor disapproved of the explanation, as containing no satisfactory answer to his objection; at least, he was so dull of apprehension, as not to comprehend it. What struck him was, that some word had crept into the clause, which the penner of it never designed. It was fair to presume, that he intended to state it in this manner, that where there is no stamp, or where there was not a plain stamp, that the vender or owner was liable to pay a penalty of ten pounds. He imagined therefore, that the word *not*, was by accident omitted. It appeared to him a gross mistake, and as such he recommended to their Lordships not to give their sanction to what at present seemed to him to be nonsense.

Earl Bathurst.

Earl Bathurst said, he had attended carefully to the noble and learned Lord's objection. The clause, if altered, would enable the fraudulent as heretofore to use the old instead of new stamps, such would be the consequence of his Lordship's amendment, for by introducing the word *not*, the venders of almanacs would be at liberty to have recourse to their long practised frauds with impunity.

The clause was agreed to without farther opposition; and witnesses called to the bar and examined, to prove the allegations stated in the preamble.

The witnesses were Doctor Dennis, vice chancellor of the university of Oxford; and Mr. Borlase, register of the university of Cambridge; and a Mr. Young.

The substance of the evidence was, that by a charter of Charles I. the university of Oxford were authorized to print all manner of books, almanacs, prognostications, &c. that

the university had leased this right to Messrs. Wright and Gill in the year 1765, at a rent or sum of five hundred and fifty pounds per annum, upon a presumption that the printing of such books was vested in the university exclusively. The original lessees re-leased the same to the Stationer's company in 1767, when it appeared that the company rendered Messrs. Wright and Gill the above sum for a part, namely the liberty of printing almanacs, psalters, A, B, C's, &c.

The original charter granted to the university of Cambridge was next produced, granted by Henry VIII. in the 20th year of his reign; proving, that an equal right had been vested by that charter in that university.

Several questions were then put to Mr. Dennis from within the bar, particularly by Earl Bathurst and Lord Walsingham; the substance of his answers was to the following effect.

That the university had continued to receive from Messrs. Wright and Gill the sum specified in the agreement till after a decree of the court of Chancery in 1776; that the money was partly applied to the keeping the school and public buildings in repair, and partly expended in the printing of learned works. He mentioned several that had been printed, or were now at press; which, from their nature, had, or were likely to have a very limited sale. Dr. Kennicott had, to encourage him to prosecute his learned and useful researches, an allowance of fifty pounds a year out of this fund; but that since the decree made by the court of Chancery, in the case of Carnan, the Stationer's company having discontinued their payments, Mr. Alderman Wright had agreed to pay for such part of the monopoly as remained the annual sum of two hundred guineas.

Mr. Borlase upon being examined, by several noble Lords, said, the five hundred a year received from the Stationer's Company, was mixed in the general fund of the university; that it had discontinued the printing of learned books, and confined their press solely to the printing of such works as were likely to produce a profit. He stated several other circumstances of less consequence; and concluded with saying, that the annual estate of the university was about fourteen hundred pounds; that it possessed ten thousand pounds in the funds, but that the interest received thereon constituted a part of the annual income already mentioned.

As soon as the witnesses withdrew, the Lord Chancellor said, ^{Lord Chancellor} ^{cc lor.} the allegations contained in the preamble remained yet to be

proved, not a syllable in either of the charters read at the bar giving the least colour to the vesting an exclusive right in the universities to print almanacs, which was the very essence of the bill, and the only solid ground on which it could firmly stand or fall.

His Lordship begged to know what were the words in those charters which conveyed the monopoly. With all his industry, and he had been peculiarly attentive while the charters were reading, the only phrase or sentence which made any impression on his mind was, *omnes libros omnimodo impressos*; that right the university of Oxford had granted to Mr. Wright for the valuable consideration of two hundred guineas a year. He submitted therefore to their Lordships, whether it would be fitting their wisdom and dignity, he might add their justice, to state that, in the preamble of a bill, to be law which was known not to be so, nor had ever been considered as such. If the facts and question of law had been truly and fairly stated, their Lordships would in that case be at liberty to act agreeably to their own judgement, they might think proper, as was the case almost every day, to make that law which was not so before; but as long as he had the honour of a seat in that House, he should ever set his face against any legislative act, however necessary or well intended, which carried on the face of it facts mistated, or false suggestions, as the grounds of their Lordships assent. This indeed, if countenanced or practised, would be a most dangerous innovation, because it would in its consequences go to the corrupting the great fountain of legislation itself, and in the end be productive of every species of evil.

So far as to the justice of the bill, as to the intended application of the money proposed to be raised by it; he confessed himself totally ignorant what motive or pretext there could be for wantonly lavishing so considerable a part of a public tax upon the two universities. Was it consistent with the wisdom and prudence of that House, at a moment like the present, when the country was pressed to the very bone by accumulating debts and taxes; when every possible means should be resorted to, to reduce the public expenditure within the narrowest circle of the most rigid œconomy, consistent with the safety, honour, and well being of the state. Was it in any point of view justifiable to bestow so large a sum, or rather throw it away upon so trifling an object?

Had

Had there been any proofs adduced to shew that the universities would thrive better with the five hundred pounds, it might furnish one argument in favour of the bill; but he would so far do them justice as to acknowledge, that nothing like it had been pretended. It was acknowledged by one witness, that the money received by the university of Oxford had been spent in public feasts, till a regulation had taken place to prevent it; and at Cambridge it had been all along thrown into the common stock of the university; nor was either stipend, in his apprehension, employed to any of the uses for which they had been originally granted.

Taking the matter on the most favourable point of view, was it of material benefit that the university of Oxford employed their money in printing books, which, when printed, nobody would buy, as had been very ingenuously stated by the reverend gentleman when examined at the bar; and for what reason? the very best in the world, because when printed it was one man in a thousand, nay in an hundred thousand, could either read or comprehend them.

For his part, when he went to university, he endeavoured to acquire that species of learning which promised to be most useful to him in his intended pursuits of life, otherwise he should think that he had spent his time very unprofitably. He never troubled himself about Persian or Coptic, but confined his attention to that kind of study, which was likely to make him understood, and to enable him to understand in turn.

Much stress had been laid on an edition of Lord Clarendon's State Letters; yet, whatever merit the university of Oxford wished to derive from this circumstance, it was at most but partial. There were many wise and able men of all parties, who thought it would have been full as well if the idea had never been suggested or adopted,—who were of opinion, that the private letters of statesmen might have better lain in their original depositaries, than after so many years be dragged into public view.

His Lordship adverted to other books mentioned at the bar, which he called curious trifles; and observed, that at Cambridge, they had long since wholly forborne to print any books but such as held out a prospect of a profitable sale. His Lordship observed, that conferring favours on the universities, was attended with a certain degree of popularity very pleasing to some men. It invited to panegyric and eulogy. It was easy to make a fine speech in their praise; and to ring the changes, *ad infinitum*, upon

upon the propriety of doing every thing which could promote their interest, as the great seminaries of morality, religion, and learning. This all founded very well in a speech; but however great the defects of the universities might be, it was one thing to reward them, and another to sacrifice law, truth, justice, and prudence to effect that, which, if necessary, could be effected without any sacrifice whatever.

He believed no noble Lord who heard him, entertained an higher veneration and respect for those two learned seminaries than he did. Extensive as they were in their learning, and exemplary in their morals, ~~he considered~~ them as every way entitled to public esteem; he thought them productive of the highest national benefit, and a public ornament to the kingdom; but deep as these ideas had imprinted themselves in his mind, he could never consent to the passing of a bill, the ground of which was founded in falshood. The claim or right stated in the preamble, being equally repugnant to law and justice. The law had already declared itself against the claim; it was unsupported by custom, and was of course, in whatever shape it might be brought forward, founded upon false premises. So far he thought he had discharged his duty; if however a majority of their Lordships should differ with him in opinion, he should in that event acquiesce, being resolved to give their Lordships no farther trouble.

Archbp of
Canterbury.

The Archbishop of *Canterbury* said, for his part he totally differed from the learned and noble Lord who spoke last. He could not see the bill in the same light in which the noble Lord had described it.

As to the money proposed to be granted to the two universities, and which had been formerly paid by the Stationer's company, it had been paid for a lease of that right, which by the charters granted to the universities, it was presumed had vested such a right in them. This right had not been questioned for a period of upwards of 150 years, and it was universally understood, that the princes who granted those charters, were fully competent so to do; not as an act of mere prerogative, unsupported by law, but as supreme head of the church.

The Calendar, annexed to the book of Common-prayer, formed part of the ritual; and therefore, in his opinion, came very properly under the cognisance of the church, and of the king its supreme head.

In former times, the Archbishop of Canterbury, or his chaplain, revised or examined every almanac before publication, and even still the same custom was adhered to in respect of the Calendar. His Grace concluded a speech of considerable length, with declaring his full approbation of the present bill, as supported by ancient indisputed claims, and strictly conformable to the rules of equity and justice.

Lord *Walsingham* opened his speech with acknowledge-^{ments} of the great abilities of the noble and learned Lord who ^{*Walsingham*} spoke lately, [the Lord Chancellor] and professing his great respect and prompt attention to whatever fell from that noble Lord. That it would ill-become him to attempt to follow that learned Lord upon this question as a point of law. That he could not conceive the merits of the decision of the court of Common Pleas need now be the subject of their Lordships discussion. Yet, if ever that question should again be agitated in any other shape, the decision he was sure would stand the test of the severest scrutiny; and though his own partial opinion might lead him from particular reasons to treat it with unusual deference and respect, yet he was authorized as a public man to speak of it as perfect, because unanimous and hitherto uncontradicted; binding because no man had ventured to appeal from it. The fact however was, that whether the decision was right or wrong, the universities had from that moment been deprived of a revenue of 500l. per annum each, which they had long been in the receipt of, in consequence of their having made over to the Stationer's company their right, whether real or supposed, of printing almanacs, until it was found that such a right was not exclusive. The bill was offered, under these circumstances, to their Lordships consideration in two lights: First, to raise an additional sum of money by way of duty upon almanacs; secondly, to appropriate 1000l. per annum of that sum, as an indemnification to the two universities for the loss they have sustained.

But the noble Lord at the head of his Majesty's council had urged another very material reason, distinct from the professed object of the bill, to induce their Lordships to concur in passing it into a law, and that was respecting the revenue, which the noble Lord proved to have been grossly injured, and that in a two-fold manner, both by fraud and evasion. The act requires a single duty for almanacs printed on one side of the paper, and a double one for all others. This they evade, by printing a sheet almanac

so that it could be folded up and bound up in a book, and be sold as a book almanac, which ought to pay double duty; and secondly, by cutting off old stamps, and affixing them to new almanacs; to prevent which, it is now proposed to print the almanac over the stamp. They answered in effect, it was true, the same end, though the mode differed according as opportunity or expediency invited.

He did not take this merely for granted, though he heard it urged in argument, but formed his opinion upon the most incontrovertible evidence, the acknowledgment of one of the offending parties: for Mr. Carnan had himself admitted the fact, and stated by way of apology, that it had been the custom of the ~~trade~~, and he had done no more than the rest of his brethren. He told their Lordships plainly, in an instrument containing his case, that he had been obliged to do so; consequently there could be no further doubt respecting that species of evasion, which, in his opinion, fully supported the preamble of the bill, which was a material part of the noble and learned Lord's objection.

His Lordship hoped, after such proofs as these, the House would entertain no farther doubts, respecting the material injury the revenue must continue to suffer should the present bill be thrown out; and if any additional motive were necessary to quicken their Lordships attention, he trusted the very pointed and just observations made by the noble Lord who spoke last, would be sufficient to satisfy their Lordships, that the present bill, independent of the profest object which it held out, seemed in the present situation of public affairs to challenge double attention.

The noble Lord had remarked with his usual ability, and pressed with his wonted weight and force of argument, the necessity of a strict collection of the national revenue, and of its faithful application and expenditure in the public service. It followed then, that if the present bill went to correct or detect an existing evil; namely, evasion of payment or actual fraud, that it of course embraced one of the prime objects, which the noble and learned Lord appeared to have so much at heart.

On this ground the bill appeared most clearly to meet the sentiments of the noble Lord, and of course must so far strike his Lordship, as wise, necessary, and expedient. He begged however to make one observation upon an argument which had fallen from the noble Lord, and which must strike home to the feelings of every serious and of every honest

honest mind, viz. the care that should be taken how new taxes were imposed upon the subject, which might be an additional grievance to them under their present difficulties. This was a tax, which if not raised by the bill, was not to be paid at all: it was an optional tax, not a tax of compulsion; for every man might buy an almanac, or not, as he pleased: it was a tax upon curiosity perhaps, or upon luxury, for it could hardly be called a necessity of life; it could be but two-pence in a year upon each individual, and most of all, it would fall upon the fraudulent, and not upon the honest part of the community.

The utility of the bill in his apprehension being thus proved, he hoped, to the full satisfaction of every noble Lord who heard him, the application of the sum, proposed to be raised, was in his opinion so less commendable, as also what advantages the public would be deprived of, if this bill did not pass into a law. He expatiated on the many useful and valuable books which never would have seen the light if it had not been for the encouragement they received from this fund, works of a curious and literary description, but perhaps not in great demand from the public at large, and which therefore it would not have answered to any person or the trade to have printed to public sale. He spoke on the excellence of their editions of the classics, and referred the House to the preface of "Dr. Hurd's Classics," a book of good repute, in which the university publications are described at large.

His Lordship took in occasion, in the course of this eulogium on the two universities, to allude to his own education there, but more particularly to his father's having represented the university of Cambridge; yet how much soever he might be attached, as if he acted on a public measure from his private feelings, he did assure the House he never wished to substitute partiality or prejudice for motives which could only operate with him as a legislator. He was bound, as a member of that House, to stifle or suspend his feelings, and only to consult his judgement, abstracted from every other consideration; to take up the measure fairly, and consider it only upon public ground.

In that point of view he was persuaded, that the bill now before the House would appear to be strictly and fully entitled to their Lordships countenance; as the benefits intended to be confined on the universities, were not partial or personal benefits to them exclusively, but directed ex-

precisely to the advancement of science, and the dissemination of learning. His Lordship then drew a comparison between the protection given to other universities in all the polished courts of Europe, and called upon the House to enable our own universities to maintain the high rank they at present enjoyed over the whole globe, as repositories of knowledge and science, in all their respective branches. He said, it had ever been the practice of all civilized countries in all times to encourage these institutions, for the obvious benefits which were the natural result of them. It had been so from the days of the learned and eloquent statesman, who established the first library at Athens, down to the times in which we live, and where that laudable emulation is still to be observed in those modern ornaments of Europe, the Emperor's library, the Louvre, and the Vatican.

Surely then with us it is peculiarly an object of legislative consideration: it has always been considered so; and it is upon this principle that the act of queen Anne directed, that copies of all books, entered at Stationers Hall, should be delivered to those two universities. And in the year 1736 he mentioned an instance of an account being laid before the House of Commons, of the actual number which had been then delivered, and which number he stated to the House. He also mentioned other instances, in which Parliament had taken up the cause of the universities on public ground.

He knew it would be very unnecessary to quote the example of the other House, or endeavour to rouse in their breasts a commendable emulation in respect of the encouragement to be given to learned men and learned works. He was persuaded, that their Lordships would not be behind hand with the other House, but would gladly stand forth the protectors, encouragers, and patrons of science, whenever patronage and protection became necessary. And here he begged leave to observe, with all possible deference to the noble Lord who spoke last, who he hoped would excuse him for differing from him respecting the works printed at the Clarendon press, which the learned Lord represented as totally useless, and not calculated to answer the real and substantial purposes of learning. He believed that might be the case in some instances, but by no means in all, or even in a comparative degree. But, allowing that the objection was better founded than it appeared to him to be; he would submit to the learned Lord, whether what might seem not to be calculated to convey general instruction, would

would not reflect honour on the university for their attention, even to the most abstruse works, if they could be useful to any particular or local branch of literature, and by having made their way to the several great seats of learning, in Europe remain as monuments of the disinterestedness and public spirit of a British university.

His Lordship urged several other able and apposite arguments in favour of the bill, which, on account of the continual disorder and talking below the bar, we could not properly collect. And, after passing some farther compliments on the Lord Chancellor, said, the bill was, upon every ground of justice and utility, entitled to his most hearty concurrence.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he thought it necessary before the committee rose, to explain a few particulars which seemed to be misunderstood by the noble Lord who spoke last. The 1st of
(June) 1781.

His Lordship, before he went into explanation paid several handsome compliments to the noble Lord's candour and abilities. He was a credit to that House, and an ornament to his public character, and as so accomplished a speaker was listened to with that degree of attention which distinguished talents were ever sure to command, it became the more necessary for him to prevent the effects of misapprehension in the speaker.

It was merely on this ground that he rose again, after having been up so often in the course of the afternoon, and he trusted their Lordships would accept of this as a proper apology for the trouble he was going to give them.

The noble Lord had thrown out an idea relative to the legal decision between the Stationer's company and their opponent, as if he had called the justice of that decision in the court of Common-pleas in question. Had he done so, he should have laid himself justly open to the most severe animadversion, because that decision made no part of the present case, and if it had, would in the manner represented by the noble Lord, have weakened, instead of strengthened his argument. The question, if he understood it right, was not directly concerning the charters granted to the two universities; but to the validity of the patent which they had granted to the Stationers company.

His Lordship made two or three observations to the same purport, and sat down with declaring his total disapprobation of the bill.

The clauses being all agreed to, the bill was immediately reported, and ordered to be read a third time.

The House adjourned at eight o'clock to the next day.

June 21.

* Their Lordships this day resumed, according to order, the committee of privileges and elections on the claim of Colonel Francis Twisleton, to the barony of Say and Sele.

The proofs were complex and various, and were rather circumstantial and collateral, than specific and direct. The claimant had a very full bar; his counsel were, the Attorney General, and Messrs. Macdonald, Lec, and Kenyon.

It was first stated, that by letters patent, the 21st of James I the ancestor of the claimant, Col. Twisleton, of the name of Lennes, was created baron Say and Sele, to him and his heirs, which of course rendered the honours descendible to the heirs-general, in failure of male issue; that this Lord had issue four sons, none of whom had issue but the second son, who had a daughter, who was married to a Mr. Twisleton. There was only a part of this son's will read, to prove this marriage; which, among other things recited, that his daughter had inter-married with the claimant's ancestor without his consent, and contrary to his approbation. The next proof was, a petition in 1709, presented to the House of Peers, we believe, when the honours were claimed by the son of this marriage, and his claim was allowed, as appeared by an entry on the Journal.

The case farther stated, that this claimant had four sons, all of whom died without issue male, but the claimant's ancestor; that the eldest son left issue one daughter, who was Lady Langham, and that she died, in the year 1715, without issue.

To prove the honours to be vested in the descendants of the second son, there was little more produced than the copies of two monumental inscriptions.

These stated, that the second son of the first Lord Say, of the Twisleton family, married in Ireland; that he had served abroad in the wars of king William and queen Anne, &c. and retired with the rank of colonel from the service in the year 1715; all which was inserted on his monument in the church of Boughton, in Oxfordshire; which inscription was authenticated upon view, by the present rector of the parish. Two other monumental inscriptions were stated, one of them in Kent, the other in Bunhill-fields burial-ground,

- ground, referring to the relationship, of the respective persons deceased, to the family of Say and Sele, which then possessed the title. One of the inscriptions was proved to exist; the other, upon search, was not to be found, or was so defaced as not to be intelligible, though there was an affidavit, signed by a noted and respectable solicitor, offered in evidence, that he had seen and read said inscription in Bunhill fields, in the year 1732, when the claimant's father sued for the present honour.

A copy of a certificate of the marriage of Col. Fiennes Twisleton, the grandfather of the present claimant, with a Miss Clark, in the castle of Dublin, was offered, but it would not be received as evidence, as the original ought to have been produced, or the copy authenticated, at the bar.

Mr. Thomas Twisleton's will, son of Colonel Fiennes Twisleton, and father of the claimant, was read, to shew that he was the son of the former and father of the latter. It was likewise proved, that Lady Langham, the last heir of the first baron Say and Sele, made a will, and appointed therein the claimant's father (Thomas) her sole heir and executor, styling him her near relation.

After all those proofs, if they could be deemed so, though they carried along with them marks of internal conviction, the most difficult part of the whole case came under consideration.

It was stated, that the claimant was the lawful son of Mr. Thomas Twisleton, of Bonhton, and of course the grandson of Colonel Fiennes Twisleton.

To prove this, a Mrs. Delafield, the claimant's aunt, was called as a witness. She said, she and her sister, the late Mrs. Twisleton, the claimant's mother, lived in the family of Twisleton, the father, that she had understood, though she was not old enough to remember, that Lady Langham was a near relation to the Twisleton family; that she, about the year 1726 or 1727, went with one of the family as a servant or companion to Yorkshire, where she remained nine or ten years, that, on her return to Oxfordshire, her sister told her in secret, that she was privately married to Mr. Twisleton; that she had then (1736) two sons born, the eldest since dead, about two years old, and the present claimant then a child in arms; that she shewed her certificate of the marriage between her and Mr. Twisleton, dated in 1732; that in the next year another son was born, the present colonel Thomas Twisleton, who is still living; and that

that after the marriage had been for several years concealed, about eight or ten, Mr. Twisleton publicly acknowledged it, and her sister was as publicly visited by people of fortune and rank, and, among others, the present Earl of Guildford; that the boys were called master Tom and Frank, &c. without the addition of any surname, till after the marriage was publicly declared; that they were sent to school to Banbury and Bloxham, and treated in every respect as gentleman's children.

A gentleman was examined as to the boys being sent to school; said he had been at the same school with them so early as the year 1740, that they were called Tommy, &c. till the marriage was publicly declared, which was not till the year 1744, when Mrs. Twisleton was visited by all the neighbouring nobility and gentry.

The Bail of *Guildford* consented to be examined respecting the intimacy between his family and Mrs. Twisleton, and confirmed every thing respecting it which had been deposed at the bar.

The claimant's father's will was then read, in which was contained an account of his several sons by name, and describing the eldest of them to be a lieutenant in the first regiment of guards, and the other in the third, of which Lord Rothes was then colonel, and reciting his provision for his wife of three hundred pounds per annum, to whom he had been married about twenty-six years before. This will was made in 1758.

Sir *Robert Eden* was called to prove, that he was present on the 10th of September, we believe in the same year, in Germany, when the said elder brother, lieutenant ——— Twisleton, of such a regiment of guards, was wounded, of which wound he immediately died.

The certificate of the marriage was likewise proved, signed by one of the curates of the parish of Cripplegate, dated 1732; and it had been deposed both by Mrs. Delafield and another witness, that the claimant was born in, or immediately about, the year 1735.

The Lord
Chancellor.

The evidence being closed, the Lord Chancellor rose and observed, that the evidence adduced in proof of the pedigree, if it could be called one, though loose, inaccurate, and wanting actual certainty or specification, nevertheless carried with it such an air of truth and authenticity, as should induce him to forbear any animadversion; so many well-devised fictions must have been created that it would do a
violence

violence to common sense and common probability, to presume that they were forged, and he was disposed to pass over this part of the case the more, as the only doubt he understood which lay upon their Lordships' minds was respecting the legitimacy. It was necessary besides, before he proceeded farther, to take notice, that the late Mr. Thomas Twisleton, the claimant's father, presented a petition to the King in the year 1733, which was referred to the then Attorney-General, Wilkes, afterwards Chief-justice of the Common-pleas, upon which Mr. Attorney made his report, which was directly in favour of the claimant, and afterwards his Majesty referred said petition and report to that House, who proceeded on it till the Parliament was dissolved. The affair having thus dropped, the claimant, for family reasons respecting the noble Lord, who held the viscountcy of Say and Sele, declined all farther proceedings.

As to the point of legitimacy, there was indeed some ground for doubt, but not sufficient in his apprehension to bar the claimant's title: there was a certificate of the marriage; there was the education of the children, and the provision made for the mother and her offspring, all confirming and corroborating the actual existence of a marriage between Mr. Thomas Twisleton, the father, and Mrs. Gardner.

There was moreover an indorsement on the back of the certificate, in the father's hand writing, authenticating in the most solemn manner the marriage; add to this circumstance, that there were motives which induced the father to conceal his marriage for a while; but as soon as that impediment (the same as prevented him from urging his claim to the peerage) was removed, he publicly acknowledged Mrs. Gardner for his wife, and she was visited in consequence of that acknowledgment by all the female, as well as male, people of fashion in her neighbourhood.

For these several reasons he should move, that the claimant being the heir general of the baron Say and Sele, created by letters patent to him and his heirs, 21st of James I. is entitled to said honours.

The committee was then dissolved, and the Chairman ordered to report said resolution immediately to the House.

Their Lordships then went to prayers, and the House being resumed, Lord Sandy's reported said resolution, which was unanimously agreed to, and an order made, that a report be made to his Majesty of the proceedings, that his Majesty may be graciously pleased to issue his writ, directed

to colonel Francis Twissleton, summoning and enjoining his attendances in that House, as baron Say and Sele.

June 22.

As soon as the private business was finished, their Lordships resumed the committee of the Isle of Man bill.

The object of the bill was shortly this: The late Duke of Athol sold the royalty of Man to the Crown, in the year 1765, for the sum of seventy thousand pounds, reserving to himself all his proprietary and manorial rights; in short, every thing he would have been entitled to as a subject.

This agreement was sanctioned by an act of Parliament, as well to the providing an equivalent as to secure to the parties, the Crown, the Duke of Athol, and the inhabitants of the Island, their respective powers, authorities, claims, and privileges.

By the penning of this act of Parliament, the family of Athol deemed themselves injured. The late Duke, for a specific sum, had agreed to part with the sovereignty of Man to the crown of Great-Britain, but they conceived, partly from the terms of the agreement, and partly from the construction put upon them by the King's officers in that Island, that he had been materially injured as lord of the soil, and as lord of the several manors of which it was composed.

The present Duke therefore had recourse to Parliament. A bill for that purpose was introduced into the other House, where it met with considerable opposition, but it at length made its way to this House.

We thought it necessary to give this short sketch of the reasons and motives of the bill, as it afterwards met with powerful opponents in the persons of the Lord Chancellor and Earl Temple.

Several witnesses were examined to prove, that many of the rights proposed to be vested in the present Duke of Athol by the bill, had never been enjoyed by the last Duke, or any of his ancestors; and a witness being called to the bar to be examined, who had signed the petition against the bill, a question of parliamentary law arose, which occasioned arguments of considerable length within the bar.

Lord Chancellor.

The Lord Chancellor was of opinion, that a petitioner against a particular clause of a bill was a competent witness respecting every other part of it but that particular clause.

Lord Loughborough.

Lord Loughborough contended, that a petitioner being a party, was incompetent to be examined (as in every other case)

cases in his own cause. As to the distinction made by the noble and learned Lord who spoke last, that a petitioner was incompetent to be examined as a witness to any other clause than that in which he was interested himself, it might be so managed, without any great stretch of ingenuity, that if there were three or more petitioners, who all wished to be examined, that A. for instance, having petitioned against a particular clause, might be rendered competent to give evidence respecting another clause, and so with B. C. and D. till at length, by this management, the several petitioners might be admitted to give evidence against the whole bill, and thus the distinction taken by the noble Lord be as effectually defeated, as if no such rule of evidence had been in existence. He was clear in the first instance, that no witness could be examined in a cause in which, as a petitioner, he had acknowledged himself to be interested; that the distinction for admitting a petitioner to be examined against every part of a bill, but what he complained of was in his opinion a distinction without a difference, and of course he was of opinion, that the evidence now offered at the bar was totally inadmissible.

The Earl of *Mansfield* observed, that the noble and learned Lord who took the lead in the present conversation, had, he presumed, formed his ideas on the general rules of evidence established in the courts below; whereas in a great variety of cases there was nothing more different. The courts below adhered to certain rules and forms for the better regulating and conducting their proceedings, so had Parliament, and in many instances they bore not the least analogy to each other.

The rule of Parliament as long as he had any knowledge of its form of proceeding, had been to refuse the evidence of any witness who had petitioned against the bill, either in the whole or in part. The reason of this rule in his apprehension, was not as had been suggested by one or two noble Lords, because he was a party, or because he might have an eventual interest in the fate of the bill, but simply, because he had signed a petition against it. His Lordship mentioned several instances, in which this rule of Parliament had been strictly adhered to; and concluded with giving it as his clear opinion, that the witness was not competent to be examined respecting any part of the bill.

The Lord Chancellor replied in a style rather bordering upon the ambiguous and ironical. He said, he had been so long accustomed to look up to the noble and learned Lord

who was so deservedly placed at the head of his profession, that he always heard with reverence and with no small degree of submission, whatever fell from his Lordship; and and whenever he had the misfortune to differ upon any professional point, with the noble Lord, he had a constant predisposition to suppose that he himself was wrong, and the noble and learned Lord right. He had been long in the habit of paying almost an implicit deference to every thing which fell from his Lordship, and to bow to it as the highest authority, having rarely listened to him upon discussions of questions of law, in which he did not bring home the fullest conviction to his mind.

These were his sentiments nakedly given, not with any view or intention of adulating the noble and learned Lord, but merely as a matter of justice.

In what he said now, he merely adverted to the judicial character of the noble and learned Lord in the court of King's-Bench; but however implicit every opinion of his as Chief-justice of that court was acquiesced in, it was not always so very current in Parliament, nor relied upon with that degree of confidence. It was only therefore as a legislator that he presumed to differ from the noble Lord, and he could safely oppose to what had been asserted by his Lordship, what frequent experience had brought within his own knowledge, while he had sat in Parliament, and acted as counsel at the bar of both houses.

His Lordship, after a variety of arguments to prove the competency of the witness offered to be examined, affirmed once more, as long as he knew any thing of Parliament, either as a member or counsel, the uniform custom had been to admit a witness to give evidence against every other part or clause of a bill but that against which he had petitioned. Upon the question put by the chairman, the witness was rejected as incompetent without a division.

Sir George Moore was then examined. His evidence went to prove, that several of the reservations in the bill were not supported by custom or usage. He said he had been Speaker in the Island upwards of thirty years. The fisheries deemed royal were very different from those deemed manerial. Within the former description came the duty or portion of all herrings caught upon the coasts of the Island, and at sea; and as to the game, he never understood that the kings of Man, as sovereigns or lords of the soil, claimed any other but hawks or hears. Partridges had got into the Island ✓

Island so early as the year 1736, and since then, grouse and moor-game, but he never knew that they had been claimed by the Athol family as a right annexed either to the sovereignty or lordship of the Island.

The counsel then went at large into the case of his clients, and pointed out a great variety of hardships they must undergo should the present bill pass into a law; contending, that the herring custom appertained to the royalty, and not to the seignory of the Island, and that consequently, while the principle of the bill went to divest out of the Crown those rights for which it had given to the late Duke of Athol a very valuable consideration; the people would on the other hand, feel themselves most grievously injured and oppressed by those middle claims, set up in the character of lord of the soil.

Earl Bathurst observed, that the bill in its present form appeared to him extremely complicated; that many solid objections had been made at the bar against several of the clauses, which in his opinion, should the bill proceed, would require fuller investigation. By saying this, he did not wish to be understood, as giving an opinion one way or other, only he thought it his duty to propose his intended motion, with his motives for making it, which were, "that the House be resumed, and that the chairman do report progress."

Earl Temple said, he had constantly attended since this business came before the House, and had given every attention to it to which it seemed to be entitled. He thus acted, for two reasons; first, under a call of general duty, as a member of that House, but more particularly as a near and dear relation of his [his father, the late George Grenville] was the person, who in the character of First Commissioner of the Treasury, was presumed to have negotiated the affair from the beginning to the final conclusion. He could not, he said, abstain from expressing his astonishment, that none of the law officers of the Crown took any part in the business. It was surely their duty to see that the rights of the Crown were not invaded; and it would be but candid in them to acknowledge, had they thought so, that the agreement made between the Crown and the Duke of Athol, intrenched on the rights of the seignory; though nothing was originally meant to be parted with or purchased, but those deemed royal or sovereign.

He fancied great attention had been originally paid to this business by the law officers at the time the agreement took

took effect; and if he was well informed whenever doubts subsequently arose, no less diligence had been resorted to.

The opinions of the Attorney and Solicitor generals, in 1765, and upon various occasions, if he was well informed, since held a very different language from that contained in the present bill. He had moved for some of the most material of those papers some days since, but they had not been till that very day produced. Where the fault originated he would not pretend to say; but till they were on the table for the perusal of their Lordships, and they had time to examine and digest them, he did not see well how their Lordships could proceed farther. The objects of the bill, when viewed in detail, might appear but trifling, but the precedent at least struck him as dangerous, because it might lead to the surrender of other rights of infinitely greater importance, and operate as an encouragement to other individuals, to come to Parliament, to urge claims equally inimical to the prerogative of the Crown and the rights and privileges of the people.

Viscount
Stormont.

Viscount *Stormont* presuming, that the noble Earl had insinuated some degree of censure on the King's servants in that House, for not having taken proper steps to enforce their Lordship's order of Monday, in conformity to the noble Earl's motion, said, there was no possible blame imputable to them. The address was presented to his Majesty as soon as it conveniently could. An order was made out to the proper officer with all suitable expedition, and if the papers had not been produced, there was neither neglect or delay on the part of those whose duty it was to see that said order was complied with. He did not wish at present to enter into the merits of the bill, when the proper time for delivering his sentiments on the subject should arrive, he was determined to give his opinion free from prejudice or partiality.

Earl Temple

Earl *Temple* assured the noble Lord he had wholly misconceived him; he never meant to insinuate the least degree of censure on the King's ministers, much less on his Lordship respecting the circumstance adverted to. He never imagined that the papers had been kept back, through design or neglect, or that ministers entertained a wish either way, than so far as justice might be concerned.

It was natural for him to betray an anxiety on the occasion, not from a desire of upholding what was wrong, but an earnest desire to scrutinize to the bottom, how far a deceased relation of his had acted agreeably to the sense of the contracting parties. He protested at the same time, if upon a fair and full investigation of the grounds and objects of that bar-

gain, it should be found, that the late Duke of Athol had, through inattention or from any other cause, parted with at that time more than the agreement itself fairly and liberally imported, so far was he from wishing to injure or oppress any man, be his character or situation what it might, that he should be one of the first who would use his best endeavours, to rectify the mistake, in order to put both parties into that situation in which they were entitled to stand.

The *Lord Chancellor* observed, that the bill was a private one in every thing but name. Whether it was such a bill as ought to pass, he was not prepared to say; because in truth, after all he had heard on the subject in that House, and at the bar, he was so dull as not to be able to comprehend it. *Lord Chancellor.*

As yet, besides, their Lordships could not pretend to form an opinion, upon having heard counsel and evidence in behalf only of one of the parties. When he heard the whole of what was to be offered on both sides, he would endeavour to make up his mind, and come to an impartial decision.

He could not avoid however taking notice, that the bill came rather under an unfavourable appearance, by being brought forward at so late a period of the session, considering its importance, and the great number of persons who were to be affected by it. It was absurd to expect a full or even a middling attendance all this summer in that House. The members fatigued and wasted by a constant application to public business several months, had gone to their country-seats for recreation, or to attend their private concerns. He would not even for a minute, harbour an idea that such a conduct on the part of the friends of the bill, had originated in unfair or impure motives, on a supposition, that a bill might be carried through a thin House, which would never have made its way through a full one. He had much too high an opinion of the honour and integrity of the noble Duke, who was principally concerned in the event of the bill, to entertain the most distant suspicion of the kind; but still truth obliged him to declare, that however clear the exception might be in the present case, the bringing in bills at the tail of a session, wore in general a very doubtful aspect. There was another bill of very singular importance as he understood, now making its way to that House (new marriage bill) which if upon no other account, he was determined to oppose upon the very ground he had been stating; and indeed, so long as he should sit in that House, the bringing in of a bill of importance, just at the eve almost of a prorogation, would always furnish him with one general argument, against entertaining it at all at so unreasonable a period.

He

He begged their Lordships would recollect, that this was the 22d day of June, that Parliament would probably be prorogued in a few days; and that under such circumstances, after consulting themselves fairly, he beseeched them to determine, whether this was a season proper for the discussion of bills, when, at a moderate computation, it might with strict justice be affirmed, that scarcely one-third of the members of both Houses were in town.

In respect of the observation, made by the noble Earl who spoke last, relative to the law-officers of the crown. If they had not attended, it might have proceeded from very proper or prudential motives; if they were called upon however for an opinion, from his knowledge of the gentlemen alluded to, he made no doubt but their decision would be founded in wisdom and justice.

The farther consideration of the bill was deferred to the 25th instant.

The other order of the day was then read, for the third reading of the bill, "for rendering valid certain articles of agreement between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Radnor, touching the enfranchisement of the impropriate rectory of Folkestone, in the county of Kent, under certain conditions therein mentioned."

Lord Chancellor.

The *Lord Chancellor* opposed the third reading, in a speech of considerable length, in which he endeavoured to prove, that the compensation, proposed to be given by the noble Earl, was not an adequate one; observing likewise how dangerous it was to establish a precedent which might lead to numerous bargains of a similar nature, which would in the end tend to the stripping the church of a considerable part of her patrimony.

Earl of Radnor.

The Earl of Radnor replied; and after stating a variety of computations affirmed, he would not have a shilling more than five per cent. for his money.

The question was at length put, when the *Lord Chancellor* divided the House. Contents 5; not-contents 9.

The bill being thus lost, the House rose at eight o'clock, and adjourned till Monday.

June 25.

As soon as the usual business was finished, the order of the day was read, for the House to go into a committee on a bill, entitled an act "To render valid certain marriages exercised in certain chapels, in which banns had not been usually

usually published, before or at the time of passing an act of the 26th of George II. for the better preventing clandestine marriages."

Lord Sandys having taken his seat at the table, the Earl of *Coventry* rose and said, he did not mean to oppose any part of the bill, but as a member of that Quarter Sessions, who, in the case of a pauper, were the occasion, by the decision they came to; in respect of that pauper, there were some difficulties which rested on his mind, which he anxiously wished to have removed.

According to the act of the late king, no marriage could be valid which should not be solemnized in some church or chapel, where it had been usual to publish the banns of matrimony. There were several chapels at that time where divine service had been performed, and a much greater number erected since the year 1752, which did not answer the description; indeed it was impossible the latter could, the same not having then been built.

The clause in the marriage act, however, admitted of a doubtful construction. When therefore the pauper, whose parents were married in such a chapel, came before the court, it was the opinion of the majority of the bench at the Quarter Sessions, among whom he had the honour to make one, that the case of the pauper was singularly severe; upon which, whether right or wrong as to the point of law, the latter of which he presumed to be the case, the Bench determined, that the issue of this marriage, the pauper was entitled to a settlement, and they decided accordingly.

From this decision of the Quarter Sessions the party appealed to the court of King's-Bench, where the contrary was determined to be law. This decision spread a general alarm throughout the whole kingdom; as it clearly decided, that all marriages solemnized in chapels, erected since the year 1752; were illegal, and of course dissoluble at pleasure; and that the issue of all such marriages would in law be deemed illegitimate.

A noble Lord in the other House, [Beauchamp] whose zeal in the cause of humanity never sleeps, stepped forth on the occasion, and produced the bill their Lordships were about to take into consideration. He begged pardon, he thought so much by way of explanation would not be improper; but the difficulty he meant to state was this: that similar cases might come before the same judicature, in which event the Quarter Sessions would be at a loss in what manner to

to act. On the one hand, the present bill was framed in order to legalize such marriages; on the other, the determination of the court of King's-Bench, for aught he knew, would operate as in the case of the pauper upon all instances, where the matter was already in the course of legal process. He was the more solicitous to have the advice of persons, better able to judge than himself, because he had more than once, within a very short period, heard a noble and learned Lord express himself rather unfavourably in respect of courts of Quarter Sessions in general. As a member of a court so constituted, he must take the liberty to seek the noble and learned Lord's advice, in order at least to remove one ground of complaint; and to beg the favour that his Lordship would strengthen their weakness, and lighten their darkness. Under such instruction he should return to the country, and resume as usual the functions of a magistrate with confidence, because, acting upon the opinion of so high an authority in law and jurisprudence, all apprehensions of error or mistakes would be removed.

*Lord
Chancellor.*

The *Lord Chancellor* said, as to the question put to him by the noble Earl, he fancied he had it in his power to do away his Lordships doubts. The purposes of the present bill were openly declared in the title to be what they really were, and the remedy proposed was a special one, directed to the evil therein described. In every other respect, the bill left the law of the 26th of the late King just where it found it. The case, as he apprehended, was this: that clergymen, ignorant of the law, had married persons contrary to the provisions of said statute, which provided, that all marriages, after such a day, should be solemnized in a church or chapel, where it had been customary or usual to publish the banns of matrimony; clearly then, as he apprehended, if any case similar to that of the pauper's, mentioned by the noble Earl, was now depending, the present bill, if passed into a law, would immediately operate upon such case, and put a stop to all farther proceedings, unless their Lordships meant to make a particular exception to the contrary.

As to what the noble Earl said, respecting the slight or contempt which he had heard thrown upon courts of Quarter Sessions in that House, it could only bare relation to him, and had arisen probably from something which had dropt from him in debating some question, where that court and its jurisdiction came to be considered. He thought he had explained himself sufficiently before, but he should now take

the

the liberty to repeat, what perhaps was not so perfectly understood or attended to at the time. He did assure the noble Lord, that he had not the most distant intention to insinuate, much less make a direct charge, against so respectable a body of noblemen and gentlemen, many of them of the first rank and character, as sat to dispense justice as magistrates throughout the kingdom: he was perfectly persuaded of their worth, honour, probity, and abilities. The only objection made by him, was to the nature and extent of the jurisdiction, not to the mode of exercising the powers vested by law in the noble and honourable persons alluded to. It was a jurisdiction, he would acknowledge, necessary in many cases, but it was a jurisdiction, which for certain purposes, and when resorted to upon certain occasions, was totally incompatible with the whole frame of our constitution, particularly so in all cases respecting property. Whenever a question of that kind was at issue, it ought, in his opinion, to be determined in some one of his Majesty's courts of law, and that by the verdict of a jury.

The Chairman then proceeded to read the several enacting clauses, but was interrupted by the Lord Chancellor when he read that for indemnifying all clergyman who had offended against the act of the late King, previous to the present bill taking effect. The clause objected to was, "And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all parsons, vicars, ministers, and curates, who have solemnized, or shall solemnize, any of the marriages which are hereby enacted to be valid in law, shall be and are hereby indemnified against the penalties inflicted by the said recited act, upon persons who shall solemnize marriages in any other place than a church or chapel, in which banns had been usually published, before or at the time of passing said recited act." His Lordship observed, that this clause was manifestly beside, or different from, the avowed purpose of the bill, which was merely to legalize marriages, which by a late determination of the Court of King's-Bench were deemed invalid. He should therefore oppose it on that ground, if he had no other objection; but he had still a much more solid reason for giving it a most marked and direct opposition.

He was ready to allow, that agreeable to the present principle of the bill, that of giving relief in all cases, where chapels had been erected since the passing of the act, the clergyman stood forth in the character of an innocent man.

Whenever that should appear to be the case, he made no doubt but he would meet every possible indulgence from the Crown, which in his apprehension was the only proper place to apply; but as he ever had, so he ever would upon every occasion that might present itself, endeavour, as far as he was able, to mark out and keep separate the powers and rights of the legislative and executive branches of the state. It was competent for Parliament to enact laws, to describe the crime, and annex the punishment. It was a prerogative of the Crown to mitigate and soften the rigour and severity of the law, where the person offending had transgressed through ignorance or inadvertency, not design. To apply the truth of those principles to the case before their Lordships, it was only necessary to observe, that as the Crown had the power, so he was sure it would have the will, to interpose and administer relief, whenever relief was sought, and the person applying should make it appear that he had not wilfully offended. On the other hand, if the present bill should pass into a law, the innocent would be confounded with the guilty; the real, premeditated felon, with the person who imagined when he was acting illegally, or rather criminally, that he was then discharging a very proper duty in the way of his profession.

On the whole, the trouble would be but trifling; the innocent man would have nothing to fear, and the guilty man would still remain under the terror of depending punishment, should he be either detected, or, upon application to the Crown, be not able to shew that his offence had originated in ignorance.

Lord
Country.

Lord *Country* wished to amend the clause provisionally, that the same had arose from ignorance or inadvertency, and urged some arguments in support of the amendment.

Lord
Counsellor.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that he would never consent, that the Parliament should intrench upon the known rights and constitutional exercise of the executive power. He presumed there was not a noble Lord who heard him, that would stand up an advocate for felony, not accidental, or incidental; but felony founded in guilt, an intentional transgression against the laws of his country. If not, then there was no occasion for the clause mended or unamended; for the innocent, on a proper application and facts stated, might be sure that the Crown would mitigate the severity of the law in respect of them,

Lord

Lord Dudley argued very strenuously in support of the 14. *Dudley* clause. He believed there were various cases which might be adduced where persons had made themselves liable to punishment for having solemnized marriages contrary to the letter of the act. He by no means saw that the bill would usurp or encroach upon the rights of the Crown; it would save the Crown, and those who might think it necessary to apply to it, great trouble and expence, and infinite vexation; and if there were any such persons as the learned Lord described, of which he retained his doubts, they could be but few in number; and even in that case, it would be perfectly consonant to the spirit of the laws of England, and that well known maxim, that it is better twenty guilty persons should escape, than one innocent person suffer, which must be the case though mercy should be extended to them; for in his opinion the very necessity of the application, and the progress of it, might be well deemed a species of punishment.

The Lord Chancellor re-worded several of his former arguments; to which he added, that it was the duty of every clergyman to be thoroughly acquainted with the law in question, because it was only under the special authority of that law that he could undertake to perform the marriage ceremony; ignorance or inattention, in respect to the authority under which he acted, was in some degree criminal, though not perhaps to the extent it would, could it be proved that he acted from sinister or interested motives. *Lord Chancellor.*

If he understood noble Lords right, the clause was purposely framed to give relief to persons who had solemnized marriages in chapels which had been erected since the passing of the law; but though nothing was more easy than to assert generally, that clergymen in every instance of the kind acted ignorantly or in advertently; he believed in his conscience it might be easily proved, that many of them had acted from motives originating in avarice and self-interest.

The erecting of chapels was pretty well known to be a builder's job: the chapel was raised or contracted for, no matter which; subscriptions were sought; it was properly furnished, and divine service was performed in it. The next object was to enlarge the receipts as much as possible; and what method better calculated to effect that, than by encouraging young people to come there to be married, and defrauding thereby the mother church of her fair and legal dues? All this, it was barely possible, might proceed from

ignorance; but he believed, without stretching the imputation too far, it was much more likely to proceed from intention, and from a most corrupt and fraudulent intention too. He was entitled to presume as well as the noble Viscount. He was entitled to say, that not only the law had made the act felony, but that it was morally, as well as legally, criminal.

Ld. Stormont Lord Stormont confessed himself totally ignorant of the business, farther than what he had collected in the course of the debate; and he was confident it amounted to an *ex post facto* law, for pardoning an extensive description of felons, which would be an usurpation of one of the dearest prerogatives of the Crown, that of administering relief to the innocent, and even of extending in some case mercy to the guilty. Such being his opinion, he was, he said, determined to vote against the clause.

A long conversation across the table ensued between the Lord Chancellor, and Lords Dudley, Coventry, and Radnor.

At length the question was put, and the committee divided. Contents for the clause, as it stood in the bill, 7; not-contents 8. Dr. Hurd, bishop of Worcester, divided for the clause, but his Lordship not being robed, the teller refused to count him in; we presume, agreeably to a standing order of the House.

The bill was then read through, the blanks filled up, and the amendments ordered to be received next day.

The House rose at six o'clock.

June 26.

This day the House resolved itself into a committee on the Isle of Man bill. As soon as Lord Sandys had taken the chair, Mr. Lee was heard as counsel for the bill, which he did very fully, in a speech of nearly two hours. He was followed by Mr. Erskine on the same side, who offered to bring evidence to the bar in proof of several of the facts stated in the argument of his learned leader.

The Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor moved, that the counsel do withdraw; and among others, submitted to their Lordships the following observations:

The learned gentleman, who spoke so ably at the bar, had endeavoured to make out his client's case in a very singular manner. He scarcely said a syllable in behalf of the rights asserted in the bill, but confined his arguments solely in combating those of his antagonists, a species of persuasion which,

which, with their Lordships, who sat there as the guardians and supporters of the public rights of the Crown, as well as the individual rights and privileges of the subjects in the Isle of Man, he presumed would never prevail. As to the event of the bill itself, he professed himself totally unbiassed and indifferent, farther than his anxiety led him to do what was right, and that only.

He was as ready to acknowledge as the most sanguine friend of the noble Duke, within or without that House, that in making the agreement on the behalf of the Crown with the noble Duke's father, that the bargain ought to have been liberally made, and the noble Duke fully recompensed. Whatever the prevailing opinion was at the time, at present signified very little. It was with an intention of promoting great public benefit; and since Parliament had adopted the idea they did on the occasion, such an agreement ought not to be conducted with that limited and parsimonious hand which governs property in transactions of a private nature.

As to his own part, however singular such an opinion might sound, what the public purchased of the late Duke of Athol seemed to him of very little consequence, no more in his apprehension than certain rights and privileges incident to the proprietor for the time being, as first magistrate and as lord of the soil; and which his Majesty's servant, in the year 1765, very wisely deemed to be improper to be longer vested in the hands of a subject, who exercised those rights independent of, and uncountrouled by, the British Parliament.

That there were a variety of instances, previous to the year 1765, in which the Lord of Man, and those who lived under his government, were amenable and controulable by the British legislature, he presumed would not be denied, because Parliament had at various times exercised a supreme, controuling power over the island. One instance he should mention so early as the reign of Henry VIII. which would supply the want of every other proof on the subject.

The Parliament which passed the statute for abolishing monasteries and abbies, and vesting the lands which belonged to them in the Crown, was extended to those religious houses as well in the Isle of Man as to England and Wales; and as a proof how little the sovereign of Man affected the real stile of a monarch, the Earl of Derby, who then possessed the royalty, instead of exclaiming against the usurpation, or
complaining

complaining of the injustice or oppression of such a stretch of foreign power, actually became lessee to the Crown, for the profits arising from the dissolved abbies and monastries within his own dominions.

Therefore in his opinion, there could exist no just ground of complaint against Parliament in the year 1765, though they had carried matters with a much higher hand than they really had done. All that Parliament stood pledged to perform was, to what she is always obliged to do; to render justice to the proprietor, by giving him a fair, equitable, and liberal compensation, for what he really parted with.

Much had been urged both within and without the bar, in order to prove, that the family of Athol had been injured; that they had been forced into a surrender of what they deemed inalienable, by the strong hand of power; and that the agreement after being forced upon them, had not been faithfully adhered to on the part of the Crown; indeed they were the only two matters urged, which bore the appearance of argument. The first, he believed, he had clearly placed in a proper view, and as to the last, which was the immediate ground of the present bill, it remained to be proved. Nothing like proof had been offered, and till he was better convinced than by a general conversation at the bar, he must confess, he found himself obliged to draw a conclusion exactly the reverse.

Much had been said likewise about waifs, strays, manerial rights, &c. whereas it appeared to have no real foundation whatever; those rights which had been thus claimed, having at different times, and upon various occasions, been granted to the lords of manors, and of course divested out of the Lord-paramount.

His Lordship, after adverting to a great variety of circumstances of a similar nature, reminded their Lordships, that they were now preparing to enter into the farther consideration of the bill on the 26th of June; that they had yet proceeded but a little way in it; that therefore, in his opinion, to enable them to come to a true judgement upon a subject in itself complex, and rendered much more so by the manner in which it had been conducted, would take much more time than they could possibly bestow on the subject at so very advanced a period of the session.

Duke of
Athol.

The Duke of *Athol* said he perfectly coincided with the noble and learned Lord, that the bill was of singular importance, and claimed every degree of attention which bills of the

the kind were naturally intitled to; for his part, there was not a noble Lord who heard him, that more sincerely wished every particular clause, even every particular sentence or paragraph in the bill, was watched with the most vigilant eye, and examined in the most minute manner; because, the more pains there were taken to develope the real purport and objects of the bill, he was persuaded, the more friends and supporters it would have in the House.

It was his interest therefore, to embrace the idea which had been thrown out by the noble and learned Lord, as he had not the good fortune to bring home conviction to his Lordship's mind, by any thing which had been offered by his counsel at the bar, or by any other means in the course of the progress of the business. He begged leave to assure the noble and learned Lord, that he was as ready as his Lordship to postpone the farther consideration of the bill till next session, as by that time, he made no doubt, but he should have it fully in his power to bring such proofs as would convince their Lordships in the most clear and unequivocal manner, that the bill was strictly founded in justice, and every way worthy of their Lordships approbation.

Earl Bathurst observed, that the noble Duke had held a language every way becoming his high rank and dignity; his ^{Earl Bathurst.} so readily closing with the sentiments of the noble and learned Lord, had done him infinite credit, and his candour, as to the mode of acceptance, could not surely be surpassed. He perfectly agreed with the noble and learned Lord, that the season was rather too far advanced to come to a decision of such importance, and in which it was apprehended, the rights and property of so numerous a body of people might be materially affected. He would therefore, in conformity to the apparent sense of the House, move, "that the chairman do leave the chair." The committee was accordingly dissolved, and the business of course postponed till the next session of Parliament.

June 27.

As soon as prayers were over, the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a committee on the Coventry Election Bill, was read; Lord Sandys accordingly took the chair of the committee.

An introductory conversation took place, previous to any discussion of the bill, in which several Lords took a part; among

among the rest, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Loughborough, and the Lords Temple, Radnor, Dudley, and one or two other.

The Chairman proceeded through several clauses till he came to the following. — “ And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that from and after the passing of this act, no greater fee than three shillings, over and above the expence of the necessary stamps, shall be demanded or taken of any person or persons, who shall be admitted to his or their freedom at any such council.”

*The Lord
Chancellor.*

The *Lord Chancellor* objected to this clause on several grounds, but he principally contended, that the rights and properties of individuals should never be taken away by an act of the legislature, unless it was the express, avowed, and particular purpose and object of the bill so to do; and even in that case, when such an alteration in the laws in being became necessary, it should either be proved, that the right or property so exercised or possessed was either usurped, and had no legal foundation to support it; or, that having a legal foundation to support it. Provisions should be made in the bill, which took those rights away, to make a full and equitable compensation.

The city of Coventry enjoyed certain corporate rights, and emoluments of a particular nature were annexed to some of those rights; among others, which was the particular case that was or would be affected by the present clause, the corporation received certain fees from all persons on the taking up their freedom. Those emoluments, however applied, were understood to be designed for the benefit and advantage of the corporation; but whether the fees so paid were so applied to the general uses of the corporation, or annexed to the offices enjoyed by certain members of the body politic, the effect was the same; they could not be taken away by a side wind; they must be first proved in a court of law to have no legal existence; or if divested out of the corporation, or any of the individuals who composed it, by an act of the legislature, it was incumbent upon the legislature to give them a fair and equitable equivalent.

*Lord Lough-
borough.*

Lord *Loughborough* controverted the general doctrine, and denied the application of it to be just in the present instance, though the doctrine itself had been maintainable. He contended that the rights of a corporation were not to be deemed personal, or intitled, if taken away, to be compensated for. They were intended for the regulation of police and good government;

government; they were consequently under the controul and ultimate direction of Parliament, whose special business and duty it was to watch over and take care that those delegated or subordinate powers vested in corporations should not be abused or directed to the effecting improper purposes.

Parliament were supposed to act, on the present occasion, both correctively and preventatively; to correct the evil in the first instance, and to prevent the return of it in time to come. The case in fact, his Lordship said, was this: In ancient times, so late as the reign of queen Elizabeth, the admission fine or fee paid by a freeman on admission was but six-pence. In the year 1734 this was raised (or recognized by a public act of the corporation) to six shillings and eight-pence, including the price of the stamp. In the year 1754, the corporation made a by-law, or regulation, to make it ten shillings and six-pence. The present bill had done no more than reducing it to a sum equal to what had been fixed by the regulation of 1734, independent of the stamp.

He begged leave to make two observations upon the consequences of rejecting or altering the present clause; one was, that by raising the fine at pleasure, it was acknowledging a right in the corporation to levy money upon the subject, which was what no body of men had a right to do, unless authorised by law; but more particularly, if the present clause was amended, it would, in fact, most probably defeat the whole bill, and that might be the design of the present opposition. If noble Lords were willing to run the risk of losing the bill intirely, for the sake of making the amendment, under the circumstances he had described, he, for one, should be for supporting the clause as it now stood.

The *Lord Chancellor* warmly urged his former argument; and said, if the rights and properties of men were to be decided upon, and disposed of in that House, or elsewhere, in their legislative capacity, there would be then an end to all law and justice. He denied that the point under controversy to be a matter of mere police and regulation, upon which Parliament, in its legislative capacity, was competent to decide; it was a species of corporate property, created by prescription or positive law, derived under the charter. If the corporate powers were abused, there was a remedy at law; if they were not, it became necessary to alter or modify them. The emoluments arising or accruing under this legal title, if taken away, challenged compensation, nor could be divested out of the corporation, without manifest injustice. He was ready to meet the noble Lord fairly; he was willing to allow, that

the object of this clause was, to prevent a supposed evil, that of preventing persons intitled to take up their freedom, by increasing the expence of admission, to a sum beyond the ability of the person wishing to be enrolled. In that point of view, he had no objection to let the clause go in its present form, if its friends would consent to have a proviso enacted, to save the rights of all the parties.

Duke of
Grafton.

The Duke of *Grafton* totally coincided with the learned Lord who spoke last, and recommended an amendment, saving the prescriptive and other rights of the corporation, and the persons claiming to be admitted.

Lord Chan-
cellor.

The Lord Chancellor, after passing some very handsome compliments on the noble Duke, respecting his constitutional knowledge; and his sacred regard for the due and impartial administration of justice, adopted the words of the noble Duke, and moved them by way of amendment.

Duke of
Chandos.

The Duke of *Chandos* spoke against the clause, and in favour of the amendment, and condemned the principle of the bill, which stated a variety of acts of a criminal nature, against persons acting in the corporation of Coventry, and yet no one proof of the presumed criminality had been made out, nor one person punished, in consequence of such misbehaviour.

Ed. Dudley.

Lord *Dudley* said, the corporation had no right to make by-laws, which went to raise money on the citizens; and that no custom was good, the origin of which could not be traced, which was plainly proved from the corporation books to be the case in the present instance.

Lord
Sandwich.

Lord *Sandwich* spoke on the same side; said, though the amendment made by the noble and learned Lord could be supported, any alteration in the money part of the bill would probably prove fatal to it in the other House. He should on that ground be against the amendment; not but he was of opinion, independent of that consideration, the amendment was totally unnecessary.

After some farther consideration, the question was put on the Lord Chancellor's amendment, and the committee divided, contents 11, not contents 15; the clause was therefore carried.

Ed. Temple.

Lord *Temple* moved an amendment relative to the specification of a penalty of 100l. to be paid by the corporation on refusing to admit any person duly intitled to take up his freedom,

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dom; which, after a short conversation, was negatived; the contents being 9, not contents 16.

His Lordship proposed a (second amendment, which was negatived without a division.

The Duke of *Chandois* then moved, that the Chairman do *Duke of Chandois* leave the chair. This produced a long conversation of little moment.

The Earl of *Sandwich* opposed the motion very warmly, *Earl of Sandwich* and endeavoured to shew the extreme necessity there was for passing the bill. The city of Coventry, whenever an opposition arose, had, time immemorial, been the scene of the most dangerous and daring riots, lives had been lost in many instances, and great mischiefs had ever attended the elections. The late one, had if possible surpassed all that went before. Under such circumstances, he wished noble Lords to consider whether it was not full time for the legislature to interfere; or whether the rights of election were to be sacrificed to brutal rage and violence? In fine, whether their Lordships would think proper to perpetuate the injury and injustice of such proceedings, and the disgrace which would necessarily attend them? He should first mention one circumstance before he sat down, to demonstrate with what rage and violence those riots were conducted. It was at one of them, a noble Lord, a member of that House, (*Denbigh*) had been dragged through the public streets and channels of the city, and otherwise maltreated, to the manifest danger of his life.

The Duke of *Chandois*'s motion was negatived, and the clauses were read without meeting with any farther opposition, and immediately reported; and the bill ordered to be read a third time.

The House rose at half after six, and adjourned to the next day.

June 28.

A bill from the other House, for giving a compensation to Doctor Smith for his attendance, in his medical character at the several prisons in and immediately about this metropolis, being first presented, and read a first time, Viscount *Dudley* moved, that said bill be read a second time on Thursday next.

The Duke of *Chandois* said, he had many solid objections *Duke of Chandois* to make against the bill, and without entering into a detail, he totally disapproved of its principle, which called upon their Lordships without any reason whatever to throw away

twelve hundred pounds of the public money. He should therefore resist the bill in the first instance. His Grace accordingly moved, that the bill be read a second time on Tuesday four weeks.

Ld. Dudley. Lord *Dudley* in a reply, of rather considerable length, went into the whole of the merits of the bill, and of the conduct of Doctor Smith throughout the whole business.

Duke of Chandos. The Duke of *Chandos* said, if he had retained a doubt relative to Doctor Smith's claim upon Parliament, the noble Viscount had furnished him with the most cogent reasons for adhering to his former opinion. Doctor Smith, says the noble Viscount, did not thrust himself officiously into the business; he did not seek to perform voluntary services with a view of being afterwards rewarded. No; Doctor Smith, says the noble Viscount, was prevailed upon to visit the prisons at the request or desire of a member of the other House. He should be glad to know the member's name who had undertaken to employ the Doctor? for he was yet to learn, what authority a member of the legislature had to employ any man, and as it were to pledge the faith of Parliament for his ultimate reward.

He begged noble Lords to reflect on the present state of our national affairs, and see fairly, whether this was a time to add to the weight of taxes and loans, the people were necessarily obliged to sustain, and the still greater burdens which must be the consequence of a war which at present held out not the most distant prospect of peace. He believed there was not a single noble Lord that heard him, who would not join in one voice in recommending the most rigid economy. He called the whole a job, calculated to serve a favoured individual, at the expence of an exhausted public, already bleeding at every pore.

Ld. Dudley. Lord *Dudley* said, he perfectly agreed with the noble Duke respecting the extreme necessity there was for adopting the most rigid economy in all financial concerns. The principle was not to be controverted, but it might nevertheless be improperly applied, as was the case, if he apprehended right, in the present instance. Money was always judiciously and properly laid out when it was given as the reward of public benefits actually received, that could not be lavished or thrown away, which was given as a reward for services actually performed; that this was the case of Doctor Smith, no person, he presumed, entertained the least doubt; he was therefore for having the bill go to that stage in which it would

would be competent to give proofs of what now could only rest upon assertion.

The noble Duke called the bill a job; he intreated their Lordships not to be caught by a popular word. The name of job, without any proof of its being so, had often turned out to be fatal; for a deaf ear was instantly turned to arguments, no matter how cogent and conclusive, and all appeals to reason and facts were instantly at an end. After some farther observations, merely personal, stating the part he had taken in the business, he hoped their Lordships would at least endeavour to be convinced that the bill was not a job, and not by taking the charge for granted, reject the bill before it came to a second reading.

The Duke of *Chandos* rose to explain; he said he never imagined, much less insinuated, that the noble Viscount had any personal interest or concern in the fate of the bill, but be it a job or not, he was determined to resist in every shape, any attempt however specious, which should have for its object the misapplication of the public money. Duke of Chandos.

The Earl of *Radnor* observed, that there was one point which must prove fatal to the bill, if there existed no other objection whatever, and which in his opinion was impossible to get over. The services said to have been performed, as stated in the bill were, that Doctor Smith had visited, attended, and otherwise assisted the sick in the several prisons within the counties of Middlesex and Surrey. There was not one of their Lordships who did not well know that services of this kind were rewarded and defrayed by the respective counties. He could therefore see no reason why the whole kingdom should be obliged to contribute to the payment of expences incurred within those two counties, unless the rule were meant to be made general and extend over the whole kingdom; that not being yet declared, it was, in his opinion, little better than insulting Parliament, to make provision for what had been already by law settled and established to be provided for in another manner. Earl of Radnor.

The Earl of *Hillsborough* professed himself totally unacquainted with the bill and every part of it, or indeed he believed with the name till he heard the title now read. If the noble Duke's motion should be adhered to, he should be drove to this dilemma, of saying content or not content. He wished therefore to know on which side to vote, for at present it would be impossible for him, informed as he was, to give a vote either way. He therefore recommended to the noble Earl of Hillsborough.

noble Duke to withdraw his motion, and permit the bill to be sent to a committee, where its merits or demerits might be fully discussed, and the claim, if any, of Doctor Smith be fairly ascertained.

The Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor made a very pointed reply, and entered into the nature of the bill, which as he proceeded he more fully explained. He concluded with giving his hearty assent to the motion made by the noble Duke.

The Earl of Hillsborough. The Earl of Hillsborough replied with some warmth. He said, he disdained the pitiful idea of voting away the property of other people, and then making a merit of liberality, as much as the noble and learned Lord; but he nevertheless wished the bill to proceed to a second reading, and then to a committee; when, if it should appear that the objections to the bill were well founded, he should be one of the foremost in reprobating it.

The Duke of Chandos. The Duke of Chandos said, his objection was not to the provisions but to the principle of the bill, and that because it would be a squandering away of the public money: he should therefore meet it on the principle, by adhering to his original motion.

The question was then put and carried; his Grace's motion consequently agreed to, and the bill of course rejected without a division.

The other order of the day was then read for the second reading of an engrossed bill from the Commons, entitled, An act for granting to a Mr. Philips the sum of three thousand six hundred pounds, for discovering a composition or powder for destroying weevils, cock-roaches, and other kinds of vermin, which prove very pernicious in the naval and other provision stores, where great quantities of bread, biscuit, and other, the provisions necessary for consumption a-board ships of war, in camps, &c. are used, as well as in gardens, pineries, hot-houses, &c.

This occasioned a debate, which was carried on for several hours with great heat between the Lord Chancellor and Lord Sandwich. The former being as warm in condemning the principles and provisions of the bill as the latter was in defending them.

The Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor in his first speech, opposed the bill, chiefly on three grounds: First, that there was no evidence before the House, sufficient to induce their Lordships to pass the bill, nor one promised but what, from the state of it as announced, amounted to no evidence at all. Secondly, the

the evidence talked of wanted certainty and specification, and dealt only in generals. And, lastly, that the House was called upon to vote the public money, not upon proofs actually had, or existing, but in contemplation, that they might hereafter be made out.

Earl *Bathurst*, who moved the second reading of the bill, ^{Earl Bathurst.} said, it was impossible to judge of the merits of the bill on the present stage. All the proofs it was true could not be adduced before the passing of the bill; but there was a clause in the bill which obviated any objection on that account, as out of the three thousand six hundred pounds to be granted, Mr. Philips was to receive but six hundred pounds till after the whole of the proofs were made out.

The Duke of *Grafton*'s argument against the bill was, ^{Duke of Grafton.} that if the discovery was of the infinite importance and public benefit it was represented to be, it would be doing injustice to the author, for it would prove a very inadequate compensation, when compared with the pecuniary advantages he might derive from it, under the sanction of a patent or monopoly; where, if the facts stated were to be depended upon, he must amass a very considerable fortune in a few years. Abandoning so fair a prospect of gain, and enormous gain too, as such a monopoly must ensure, were the grounds or motives for passing the present bill to be relied upon, he had every reason to conclude, that the discoverer had taken the most wise and prudent course; being conscious, that either the whole was a bubble, or that he was not confident of success; nor had fully proved by experiment what he wished might possibly happen.

Lord *Sandwich* rose in reply to what had fallen from the ^{Lord} Lord Chancellor and the Duke of *Grafton* in the preceding ^{Sandwich.} part of the debate.

Before he entered into the subject, his Lordship stated the numerous mischiefs and the detriment the public suffered from the vermin proposed to be destroyed by this new invention. He read a list of those losses, as stated to him by several of the inferior boards, and contrasted those losses with an account of the experiments which had been made on the powder, and how very successful those experiments had proved.

His Lordship proceeded to answer the objections he had heard stated, he said, by the noble Lord on the woolpack, and the noble Duke in the blue ribbon [*Grafton*].

The

The noble and learned Lord took a very summary way of getting rid of the bill, without putting himself to any trouble whatever, either in respect of proof or argument. His Lordship had recourse to generals, but carefully abstained, for very obvious reasons, from entering into particulars. The learned Lord talked of the lateness of the season, of the advanced period of the session, just approaching to a conclusion. This, if a good objection, held equally against the farther prosecution of public business, let it be of ever such great importance, or carried no weight at all with it; for it amounted to this, that the importance of the object ought to be taken into consideration, and if it was worthy of the attention he thought it was, which could only be decided by enquiry and investigation, then every conclusion drawn to the disfavour of the bill, on account of the advanced period of the session, was clearly at an end. For his part, he thought the bill of very great importance, consequently he could pay no attention to that particular objection.

The learned Lord had conjured up another objection to the bill, which his Lordship predicted must prove fatal. That was, the distressed state of the country, the enormous expences of the war, and the necessary burdens which were the consequence of them; of course the rigid economy which became necessary in such a state of things, and moreover the impropriety of giving away money which was destined for public services, and the applying it to private purposes.

He would endeavour to give each of these a separate and distinct answer. This objection, like the foregoing, was taken up on general ideas. He hoped this country was not so far reduced as to have its finances materially affected by the sum proposed to be given to the inventor; but if the learned Lord's objection was founded, that he would not have objected to the bill, if the money raised upon the people was applied to the purposes for which it was granted, that is, for public services, he was ready to say and prove, that the objection was answered, for the present bill would do no more. It would dispose of such a sum of money under the sanction of Parliament, for promoting a great public benefit, which, if he understood any thing of the phrase, came precisely within the description of public services.

His Lordship relied much on the authority on which the grounds of the present bill was founded, particularly the
commissioners

commissioners of the victualling-office, and a captain of a man of war (we believe a Captain Dalrymple), who had tried the experiment, and who spoke largely and positively of the efficacy of the powders.

This, surely, was a species of evidence which ought not to be rejected till heard, or until it should upon hearing be pronounced too weak or irrelative. It was impossible to decide upon it in this stage of the bill, and of course he trusted the learned Lord would not be against having witnesses called to the bar and examined, should the House think proper to send the bill to a committee.

He was of opinion, clearly, that the present bill was well entitled to the most serious attention of the House; that it was a public object of considerable importance; and that it challenged, in a peculiar manner, the protection and patronage of their Lordships in the style and manner it presented itself.

Parliament were the guardians of the nation; it was their duty to promote every beneficial scheme offered to their consideration; and not, upon mere general objections, unfounded suggestions, and vague arguments, pre-determine, without enquiry, what they were only competent to decide upon clear and satisfactory proof.

There was nothing which came under his cognizance in the department over which he had the honour to preside, that more employed his thoughts and exertions to effect than that of preserving the health of the seamen; and whenever such an object came in view, he should for one think it extremely improper, if not impolitic, to oppose the expence it might put the nation to, to so great and wished-for an object as that of keeping our seamen in a state of health, to enable them to perform their duty, and to prevent that mortality which was ever the consequence of neglect, and had always proved so ruinous and destructive to the service.

It might, for instance, with equal justice be imputed to him, that he had lately put the nation to a very considerable additional expence in the article of four-croust, which he had given directions to have served aboard his Majesty's ships of war. But after having made the most diligent and satisfactory enquiries, being fully convinced that four-croust was one of the greatest anti-scorbutics ever invented, or antidote against those disorders which seamen, from the nature of the service, are subject, he no longer hesitated



about the additional expence, nor was he prevented, by notions of an ill-timed and impolitic economy, to consult the real good of the service. On the contrary, he had run a risque of falling under the animadversions of those who delight to find fault, and are ever ready to suggest the most unfavourable consequences; and took, as he ever should, when the interests of his sovereign and his country required, a most active part, never shrinking, or wishing to shrink, from the responsibility which ever accompanied acts of office which were not sanctioned by the usual form.

The noble Duke in the blue ribbon recommended a patent. He confessed he had always been an enemy to monopolies of every kind; they had in the end almost always proved detrimental to the public. If they succeeded, the patentee was left at liberty to raise his price at his pleasure: indeed they seldom did succeed; and when they did, it was next to impossible to ascertain the difference between the original and the numerous counterfeits which were made in consequence of it; so that while the patentee was robbed of the fruits of his invention, the public were cheated by a set of adventurers and impostors.

The learned and noble Lord was for deserting the bill till next session; but in his opinion, considering the peculiar distresses Mr. Philips laboured under, it would in the event amount to a complete negative. The sum which he was to touch, was but six hundred pounds till after the efficacy of the powder had been satisfactorily and ultimately proved; and even supposing the worst, that the powder should not answer in every particular instance predicted, he could not see that such an advance, upon proofs already given, would, in the language of the noble and learned Lord, amount to an enormous and shameful waste of public money.

His Lordship concluded with assuring the House, that the naval and other inferior boards in his department, so confident were they of the efficacy of the powder, that they had already purchased it in great quantities; and he understood so far as trials had been made and the effects ascertained, the powder had answered the most sanguine expectations.

Duke of
Grafton.

The Duke of *Grafton* observed, that if, as the noble Earl had stated, the powder had hitherto in every trial proved so very efficacious, and if such great quantities had been tried, and so great a demand created in consequence of the success of those trials, Mr. Philips, the inventor, could not possibly be the distressed man he had been described by the noble Earl.

Earl. The profits on the sale must bear some reasonable proportion to the quantities sold; and if there was no doubt of the success of the powder nor of the vent, it furnished the most cogent reason for deferring the bill to another year.

The noble Earl, with a spirit and candour that is natural to him, says, he never stands at trifles or risques when the public service is likely to be benefited. In the present instance, his Lordship does not entertain a single doubt of the success of the discovery. Why not then act throughout with the same liberal spirit he should when his Lordship first rose? Why not at once purchase such a quantity of the powder, for the use of the navy, as may for the present relieve the discoverer from his embarrassments, and defer the bill till a period when Mr. Philips could have nothing to apprehend from Parliament, but a ready acquiescence in rewarding a man who had so materially benefited the public.

The Earl of *Sandwich* said, his situation did not permit him to sport with or dispose of the public money; nor could he disburse a shilling without the previous approbation of Parliament. Earl Sandwich.

The *Lord Chancellor* came for the second time from the woolpack to his place, and begun with observing, that he had the misfortune to be misunderstood in what he said when he first rose. He was charged with dealing in generals, and avoiding to enter into particulars; now, for his part, he imagined, that if any objection properly lay against his arguments, it was because they consisted of a regular series of particulars, in which general abstract reasoning had little or nothing to do. The Lord Chancellor.

His first objection to the bill was, that the evidence was not such as to entitle it to their Lordships sanction. This, it was true, might be deemed a general objection, had he neglected to follow it up with specifying the several motives which induced him to be of that opinion. His reasons were numerous, and out of many which he urged he should just remind the noble Lord of two or three. One reason was, that the facts stated in the preamble were either not proved, or acknowledged to be false. The noble Earl at the head of the council [*Bathurst*] confessed as much, for he fairly acknowledged, with his usual openness and candour, that the experiments made upon vermin in gardens had in fact miscarried. Here then he was at liberty to affirm that the preamble of the bill contained a falsehood on the very face of it; because it stated, that Philips's powder or composition was a



powder for the destruction of caterpillars, flies, and other vermin in gardens; whereas the experiments made warranted no such allegation. So far then the noble Earl must acknowledge his mistake, when his Lordship charged him with dealing entirely in generals; for here was a particular objection, and a fatal one too, unless the preamble should be amended.

The other part of the preamble, relative to the weevils and cock-roaches, afforded him an opportunity of shewing that he had not entirely relied upon general arguments; for, if his memory served him right, he had objected to the evidence adduced in support of the efficacy of the powders in that instance, as well as the foregoing; for he would ever hold it parliamentary language, fit and becoming the duty and dignity of that House, if any doubt arose respecting the species, competency, or grounds of proof which might have induced the other to pass any bill, or the suggestions, opinions or motives which might have operated upon it, to act or determine in such and such a manner, that their Lordships were to take nothing upon trust or authority, but were bound, as legislators and honest men, to satisfy their own consciences in endeavouring to get at the truth. It was on this clear parliamentary ground that he stood, for he would defy the noble Earl, or any other noble Lord who heard him, to say that House was in possession of a single fact to prove the efficacy of the powder in destroying weevils and cock-roaches, no more than the ants. Here was another particular objection; he would proceed a step farther, upon evidence which the noble Lord would, he presumed, hardly attempt to controvert; no other than evidence drawn from the bill itself.

What does the bill say, or rather what does it confess? That no such discovery has yet been duly or satisfactorily proved.

The bill proposes, in the first instance, to give Philips, the supposed inventor, the sum of six hundred pounds, out of a sum of three thousand six hundred pounds, intended for him at some future day. What! six hundred pounds! when the bill says, in another part, that the discovery has not only been made, but fully proved. The conduct of the bill in this particular called for no comment; it was contradictory and absurd. It states that the discovery has been made, and proved in part, and with-holds the reward upon a presumption, or possibility, that it has not been made nor proved, in another. But to varnish over this absurdity, a most extraordinary step of parliamentary management is devised. It is no less than the very deceit request made to the legislature to

to vote three thousand six hundred pounds as a reward for an eventual benefit, but at the same time to delegate a power to another description of men, namely, the Navy or Victualling Boards, to dispose of the remaining three thousand, after making an advance, *in present*, of the other six hundred. This he was ready to declare was a direct insult upon Parliament, to call upon them to grant money in such a way; it was making them a mere registry of the wishes or designs of other men, and desiring them at the same time to divest themselves of the power of controuling the disposition of the money; for as soon as the bill passed, Parliament would have no more to say to the disposition than if no such grant had ever passed that House. Here he would make his particular stand, and he trusted, that although no other objection existed, this alone would prevent their Lordships from giving their assent to the bill.

The noble Lord said, What! oppose the bill in this stage? You call for evidence, but by refusing to send it to a Committee you shut out every species of proof whatever. He was persuaded there was not a noble Lord that heard him, however willing they might be to send the bill to a Committee, who would not acknowledge that nothing more could come out in the Committee than what their Lordships were already in possession of; suggestions, expectations, and probabilities, of what might or might not hereafter turn out to be true. If the noble Lord who spoke so long and so ably in favour of the bill would boldly come forward, and say, that he had better and more relative proof to lay before the Committee, then to be sure all opposition in this stage of the bill ought to be at end; but the frame and whole texture of the bill gave the fullest proof that no such thing was intended; on the contrary, the bill was framed upon supposition; the allegations taken upon supposition; and, if it should meet with their Lordships concurrence, must be passed upon supposition.

The noble Lord had spoke with his usual energy and volubility in reprobating "the poor ideas of a narrow and short-sighted policy, in dealing out, with a niggardly and trembling hand, the public money, when the welfare of the nation required a most liberal, generous, and grateful conduct. Public services, said a noble Lord, whatever the situation of this country may be represented by its public or concealed enemies, were great, powerful, and flourishing."—So far as the assertion went to maintain the ability of this country to meet her neighbouring enemies, he entirely coincided in sentiment with the noble Lord. No man could be more perfect-

ly persuaded of the great resources of this country than he was. He knew she abounded in native and acquired strength, and entertained not a single doubt but her finances were such as would enable her to carry on a war, against all those confederated against her, for several years to come; but when this abstract proposition came to be applied to the existing subject under their Lordships consideration, it called for some explanation.

What does the bill say? that the sum carved out is to be drawn from the supplies granted the present session of Parliament; so far then, on the face of it, it takes the money already appropriated for public services, and applies it to a private purpose; for until proof were made of the efficacy of the powder, he should ever consider the present a private gratuity, destined to a private purpose.

Now, whatever the noble Lord might think respecting public generosity and public gratitude, in his apprehension the obligation and the object ought to be first ascertained. Mr. Philips, after all the noble Lord had said in his praise, he had no room to doubt was a very ingenious and deserving man; but still his deserts were of a private nature, unless in relation to the noble Lord and a few of his friends. He honoured the noble Lord for the warmth of his friendships; but sitting as he did there, in his public capacity, he could never persuade himself to reward a man publicly, that is, with the public money, till he had done something for the public to deserve it.

If he understood any thing of taxes, supplies, or of the public revenue, it originated in this simple and clear principle, which he trusted no person who heard him would controvert, that the public contributed a certain part of their individual property in the expectation, and for the purpose of deriving thereby some actual or probable benefit. Apply this maxim to the case before their Lordships, and they would perceive that they were equally bound, by every principle of justice, honour, and true generosity, not to dispose of or grant away the money entrusted to their care, but upon the terms on which only they were competent to give it.

He did not confine his objections merely to the largeness or smallness of the sum sought; it was the example, it was the principle chiefly against which he would, as long as he lived, steadily set his face: for he was firmly persuaded, from the several attempts made of late years in this way, that applications would become every session more frequent; that the public money would be lavished, and not barely thrown
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away, but bestowed upon the most worthless and undeserving men, perhaps, who had no other claim but what the consciousness of having some powerful friends to support them first suggested.

Their Lordships had a very recent instance in respect of a bill they had just disposed of; a bill from the other House, desiring their Lordships to give a Dr. Smith 1200*l.* not for services to be done, but which had been actually performed. But how did this claim originate? Why, thus; the prisons in the counties of Middlesex and Surrey were or were not neglected; for as to the claim, it was not necessary to determine. Well, Dr. Smith offers his services, or is desired by a member of the other House, since deceased (Sir Charles Whitworth) to attend the prisons in those two counties. The doctor executes his commission, and comes to Parliament with a demand of 1200*l.* for his trouble; though there is a provision made by law in each county and all over the kingdom for the very purpose. Their Lordships had, however, very properly rejected the request; for most clearly, if they had not, there would not be a single county, town, or city in the kingdom in which some other doctor would not start up, and the tables of both Houses soon be covered with apothecaries bills and prescriptions; and a precedent for neglect on one side, and jobbing on the other, would be fully established, upon no better ground than that some member of the other House, or this House, had desired one man to perform the duty of another, and invited him to go to Parliament for his reward.

He was not disappointed in his expectations when the noble Lord rose; he promised to himself the pleasure of hearing a very full and warm eulogium upon all the boards which are connected with, or dependent upon the very high department the noble Lord so ably and honourably fills, with a panegyric upon particular persons who had the honour of his Lordship's friendship. The noble Lord has done both; but however ready he was to pay the most implicit credit to every thing asserted by the noble Lord, as a member of that House, they amounted to no more than assurances that ought to be believed, so far as they related to the noble Earl himself; but in point of evidence, the saying, that the gentleman who sat at this or that board were persons of the best understandings and of the most approved integrity, and that such an officer was no less known for his gallantry and skill in his profession; every title of this he was ready to subscribe to; but the integrity of one, the abilities of a second, or the bravery
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of a third, fell very short, in his apprehension, of proving the pretended efficacy of the powders.

The noble Lord had, after producing private or conversational evidence on the subject, considerably extended his views; he had not only proved in his own way the efficacy of the powder, but entered into a kind of dissertation upon that salubrious viand, four-croust. The noble Lord has told your Lordships, that he has put the nation to a very considerable expence in the article of four-croust; his Lordship has assured you, that being perfectly satisfied himself of its salubrious qualities, and of its almost miraculous effects in preserving the health of the seamen, that he did not wait to take the the advice, or procure the previous sanction of Parliament (nor, his Lordship might have added, of procuring a patent) in its favour: No; his Lordship declares, that for the good of his country, which must have in the mean time been deprived of the benefits deriveable from so valuable a succedaneum of health, he broke through the bond of common office forms, which are binding on ordinary occasions, and run the risque of the event. His Lordship, as he always does when he acts on his own suggestions and judgement, acted with equal spirit and candour. He acted like a great minister; he took the responsibility upon himself, he purchased immense quantities of four-croust, thereby subjecting himself to the future approbation or disapprobation of Parliament.

His Lordship, after paying numerous other compliments in the same stile to the First Lord of the Admiralty, alternately pointing out his wisdom, spirit, and firm attachment to his country, made a few observations on the nature and obvious tendency of the bill.

The preamble, as he observed before, his Lordship said, consisted of two parts, namely, the destructions of the caterpillars and other mischievous vermin in gardens, and of the weevils, cock-roaches, &c. in his Majesty's provision stores, but more particularly among the provisions aboard his Majesty's ships of war. They were, it was true, strange names; some of which he had never before heard of. The animals so described were no less strange in their nature: The whole bore a wonderful strange appearance; for the operation of the powder on those animals was, if possible, more strange than any other circumstance whatever.

The effects of the process and experiments made upon those cock-roaches, caterpillars, &c. as he understood, were
more

more than strange; for they struck him as truly extraordinary. The poor caterpillars, the garden-inhabitants, were first attacked; the powder was administered to them, or thrown in their way. They grew sick, very sick indeed! but they unhappily recovered. This trial convinced those who made it, that the powder was very good, strong, and efficacious; but the patients were not of the right kind. Others of a different constitution are now anxiously sought after by the discoverer and his assistants; yet he has not been so fortunate hitherto as to find out the kind of vermin he wants.

The noble Earl at the head of his Majesty's council acknowledges very ingenuously, that the right subjects are not yet found. These are the latest accounts; and, it is presumed, may be relied on with confidence. As soon as they shall, your Lordships may depend upon hearing the happy and important tidings announced in due form, and all the circumstances leading to an event of such consequence authenticated from the most respectable authority.

His Lordship, by way of recapitulation, took a transient glance at the four-crown, the noble Lords avowed responsibility for the great risque his Lordship run in ordering such vast quantities of four crown to be purchased without the previous consent of Parliament, and concluded a speech, which took a full hour and a half in the delivery, with professing his full disapprobation of the principle as well as provisions of the bill.

Lord *Dudley* contended, that granting Mr. Philips a monopoly would not be properly rewarding him for a public benefit, as the service expected would be of a public nature. Counterfeits might defeat the private advantages, and moreover, whatever demand he might have for his powder, it might be many years before he could reimburse himself for his great trouble, toil, and expence. Lord Dudley.

The Duke of *Grafton* replied, if the amount of damage stated by the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty had been correctly given, and that the author was allowed only a reasonable profit, his emolument would amount to more within a single year than the sum designed for him by this bill. Duke of Grafton.

The Lord *Chancellor* said, there was one objection which, in his apprehension, must prove fatal to the bill even in this stage, which was, that the money was to be granted in præ-sente, upon proofs of its efficacy to be made in futuro. Lord Chancellor.

Lord *Suffolk* called it a notorious and palpable job; said, the great number of years he had sat in the other House, he

scarcely ever remembered a session in which two or three jobs of this kind were not attempted, or carried through. One instance of it just struck his mind; it was a man from Manchester, who pretended to have discovered a method of dying cotton goods in a most extraordinary manner. Specimens were produced, and laid upon the table of the House of Commons. He examined them, and confessed they were most beautiful; but after the fellow had procured five thousand pounds for his wonderful discovery, upon enquiry, he found out it was all a cheat, for the colours, as he was afterwards well informed, flew in three or four days, and lost all their external beauty.

Lord Pre-
sident.

The *Lord President* said, it would be disrespectful to the other House to reject the bill in this stage: that the money, though granted, could not be disposed of till proofs of the efficacy of the powder were fully made and established; and that the proper stage to decide upon evidence, if it should be wanted, was in the committee.

Duke of
Glar don.

The Duke of *Glar don* said a few words against the bill, and moved, that the farther consideration of it should be put off till that day month.

The question being put, the House divided, contents 10, not contents 21. The bill was then read a second time, and committed for the next day.

As soon as the debate was finished, Mr. Fox, who had been present the whole time near the throne, came down below the bar, and presented a bill for the repeal of certain clauses in the Marriage Bill, passed the 26th of the late King.

The bill was ordered to be read a first time the next day, and the House adjourned at half after seven o'clock.

June 29.

As soon as prayers were over, the order of the day for the third reading of the Coventry election bill being read, a motion was made to add an amendment, which, after a short conversation, was agreed to, and the same was sent back to the Commons.

The order of the day was then read, for the House to resolve itself into a Committee on the bill for granting a certain sum of money to Mr. Phillips, of Knightsbridge, for his discovery of a powder, or composition, for destroying weevils, cock-roaches, &c. in his Majesty's provision stores, both on land and a ship-board, and caterpillars and other noxious vermin in gardens.—Lord Sandys presided as Chairman.

Mr. Bate

Mr. Bate, one of the Commissioners of the Victualling Office, was examined, and from computations which had been made in his department, it appeared, that so far only as those computations reached, the damage amounted, within the three last years, to fifteen thousand pounds. Other witnesses spoke to some experiments made; but the evidence being objected to, as not coming up to the allegations set forth in the bill, Lord Sandwich read a letter from a captain of a man of war, directed to Mr. Stephens, secretary to the Admiralty, in confirmation of what was deposed at the bar.

The Lord *Chancellor* objected to the receiving the said letter *Lord Chancellor* as evidence. He observed, if letters were to be brought forward in this way, at the pleasure of any noble Lord who might think proper to draw forth one out of his pocket, and authenticate the same upon his word, there would be an end of all parliamentary proof, and the calling of evidence to support the allegations of a bill would be no better than a mere farce. If such hearsay letters, at a second, or third hand, were to have any weight, they should be moved for regularly, and an address should go in form to his Majesty, to pray him to give direction, that said letter or other paper be laid before the House as a parliamentary document.

After some farther conversation on the subject, of little or no consequence, it was at length agreed to postpone the farther consideration of the bill till Tuesday next.

One of the gardeners, who was to prove the effects of the powders in his gardens, was absent, as was likewise Mr. Hanway, one of the Commissioners of the Navy or Victualling-Office.

The bill for repealing certain provisions in the Marriage Act was read a first time, and ordered to be printed.

The House rose at half after six o'clock, and adjourned till Monday.

July 2.

The order of the day was for taking into consideration the petition presented from the American prisoners to that House to the Duke of Richmond, respecting government allowance of food and raiment. His Grace, agreeably to promise, took the petition off the table; and the same being read, he ordered enquiry to be made, whether the Commissioners of Sick and Hurt, or any of them, were in waiting and being answered by Lord Sandwich that Mr. Lulman attended, he was called to the bar and examined.

His evidence was in substance, that he had visited Mill-prison on the 5th of June, and found the prisoners in health and spirits; if they wanted clothes, it was because they disposed of them to the French for money; which happened to be particularly the case in the article of stockings. That if any complaint was made, it was instantly remedied; and the American prisoners were clothed like the English sailors.

The foregoing evidence Dr. Farquharson corroborated. The only precedents the Board had to resort to were two. The one, the allowance made the rebel prisoners in 1745; the other, the allowance made the British soldiers on board of transports. They found the first were granted fourpence per man per diem, which was laid out for them by the Commissioners of Sick and Hurt, in the purchase of one pound of bread, half a pound of meat, and a quarter of pound of cheese, without either pease or beer. The British soldiers were allowed a less proportion of bread, and some of the other articles, than the American prisoners, but a larger proportion of beer.

A question arose with the commissioners, how the Americans should be treated; and they at length agreed upon the following allowance:—a pound of bread, a quart of small beer, three-quarters of a pound of meat, a portion of pease, or greens instead of them, and either a piece of butter or a piece of cheese. This allowance, Doctor Farquharson said, had been determined on from the commencement of the war, and had been uniformly adhered to ever since.

Duke of
Richmond.

The examination being at an end, the Duke of Richmond rose and said, he took up the present business with no view whatever but to prevent the British character for liberality from being injured; it was that, he said, that raised this country to high in reputation last war. All our victories weighed nothing in the scale of consideration, in the eyes of foreign powers, compared to the tenderness, the humanity, and the kind manner in which we treated those of our enemies whom the fortune of war had put into our power. He wished therefore, most anxiously, to preserve that high national reputation in its full splendour, and he was persuaded, that when no constitutional question, no party principle was suffered to mix with a subject of the sort with that before the House, and when the appeal was solely directed to that noblest of all the feelings implanted in the breasts of their Lordships, the impulse of humanity instead

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of its being necessary to use a number of words on the occasion, an apology was due to them for his using any to excite those sentiments which all the world knew to be uppermost of all that could have any existence with a British House of Peers. The evidence their Lordships had just heard, it was true, proved, that the part of the petition, which stated the prisoners were naked, and were suffered to remain without needful clothing, was ill-founded; but then the House must admit, that, from the nature of things, the evidence was necessarily partial, and the only means at getting at fair and equal testimony lay, as far as he knew, beyond the reach of their Lordships; for, certainly, unless some of the subscribers to the petition could be brought to the bar, to be heard as to the reasons on which they grounded that part of the petition, it could not be said that the case was wholly before the House. He had lately been applied to, from some persons in Holland, and desired to take the charge of distributing fifteen hundred pounds, (raised among certain gentlemen of property in the United Provinces,) among the Dutch prisoners in this country; and upon application to the Commissioners of Sick and Hurt, in order to get information how he should proceed, they not only made him master of the proper means of distributing the money, but gave him every sort of assistance that could reasonably be desired.

The Dutch, his Grace said, had by some means or other, reports made to them, which led them to imagine that their countrymen, who were prisoners in England, were treated with unkindness and inhumanity; on their appointing an agent to enquire into the foundation of the complaint, the Commissioners of Sick and Hurt gave the agent an opportunity of seeing the Dutch prisoners in all the most general places of confinement, and after a personal examination into the circumstances of their situation, the agent found that there was no cause for the complaint, and that the grievances alledged were totally groundless. Without therefore going into any distinction with regard to the country of one prisoner, or the country of another; without talking of the cause for which each made war; without denying that the Americans were rebels, or asserting, as he might possibly be inclined to assert, that they took up arms justifiably, in defence of their liberties; it was enough for him to say, that it was manifest some prisoners of war had a larger allowance than others; and that if the allowance made the French, Spanish and Dutch prisoners, was barely sufficient to sustain them,

them, the allowance made the American prisoners was not enough; and so, *vice versa*, if the allowance made the latter was sufficient, the allowance of the former was superabundant and larger than it ought to be. His Grace proceeded, and said, that it ill became Great Britain to treat those prisoners with greater parsimony, and with less liberality in point of food, with whose country we wished for re-union and reconciliation, than the prisoners of France; a nation which some persons had stated to be our natural foe, but which certainly was our more frequent enemy than America had proved herself.

His Grace concluded with moving in the usual form, praying that his Majesty would be pleased to give directions, that the American prisoners should not be in a worse condition than those of France, Spain, and Holland.—This was the substance of the Address.

Lord
Sandwich.

Lord Sandwich said, after the evidence which their Lordships had just heard, he trusted the House would not think it either necessary or expedient to agree to the noble Duke's motion. It had been proved at the Bar, that the American prisoners were in good health, that they had a sufficient quantity of provisions, and that they were comfortably clad at the expence of this country. He appealed to their Lordships, whether, if men accustomed to hard labour in the open air, were healthy and content with a small portion of food, the present allowance to the American prisoners, who were in a state of inactivity and confinement, was not at least as much as could be reasonably expected?

Lord Abingdon and Lord Coventry spoke shortly to the question, but offered nothing new on the subject.

Mr. & Messrs.
Brough.

Lord Louisa Brough said, he had paid a good deal of attention to the subject, from the first moment it had been started in the House by the noble Duke's notice. He had attended likewise to the arguments, that had been held, and the evidence that had been adduced upon it, in another place, and he was perfectly astonished to find, that after all, the sole cause of complaint was, that half a pound of bread was allowed to the French prisoners daily more than was allowed the Americans. Enquiries of the kind with the present, he held to be highly laudable, and such as reflected great honour on those who set them on foot. The treatment of all persons, whom the situation of Great Britain and the fortune of war had put in our power, and whom the necessity of affairs obliged us to hold in restraint, was undoubtedly a subject, which concerned us, as a nation, to look to, and to

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see that it was not rendered more hard nor more severe than was consistent with true policy, with humanity, and with that exalted degree of liberality and tenderness, which had, during the last war, and which, he trusted, would, during every war, distinguish this country, and place it above all others. But he could not help repeating his astonishment, to find, after the present enquiry had been sifted to the bottom, that the difference of half a pound of bread per day should remain the only ground of complaint. A book, published by Mr. Howard, setting forth the state of all the prisons in England at the time he viewed them; among other prisons, notice was taken of Mill-Prison, at Plymouth, of Foston Prison, at Portsmouth, and of the established proportion of bread, and every other species of provisions allowed to the different prisoners of war in each. The distinction now dwelt upon, as the subject of the Address just moved, was expressly stated by Mr. Howard, but without any remark, the smallest objection, or the least imputation of censure.

In France, it being usual to consume a much greater proportion of bread than was the custom in this country, the Government had wisely allotted a pound and a half of bread to every prisoner in every jail throughout the kingdom. It was therefore necessary for us to adopt the same rule with regard to the French prisoners, and to feed them in proportion to their habits of taking food in their own country. With an American the case was different. An American, like an Englishman, was accustomed to eat more animal food than bread, and therefore in apportioning his allowance, that circumstance deserved attention. Besides, a pound of bread was the ordinary jail allowance throughout this kingdom. Even by the act, which from its having originated in that House, was generally called the Lord's Act, it was ordained, those persons, whose cases most loudly called for compassion, viz. persons, who having surrendered their all, were still detained in prison, should be allowed a groat a day; which purchased just that proportion of bread and beef, &c. that Dr. Farquharson had stated to have been purchased with the same sum, for the rebel prisoners in 1745. His Lordship concluded with declaring himself against the motion.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, he had expected to have heard some better arguments against his motion from a noble Lord, who had raised himself by his superior abilities to the elevated and distinguished station which he then filled. The noble Lord, he observed, had made it his first objection, that the present was an old story, and that the difference of
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the allowance to the French, Spanish, and Dutch prisoners, and the allowance made to the American prisoners, was mentioned by Mr. Howard, and was to be found correctly related in his book on the state of our prisons. This was, his Grace said, exactly like what every house-keeper daily experienced; whenever he found any thing broke in his house, his servants always answered, "Oh, sir, it has been broken a long time." He appealed to the House, whether the long existence of an evil proved that it was less an evil; and contended, that in the present case, it did not diminish the extent and size of the mischief, that it turned out to have been a mischief of long duration. With regard to the allotment of a pound of bread to prisoners, in all the jails of the kingdom, the noble Lord in the black gown had mistaken a fact accidentally; he took it for granted. The fact in that respect was otherwise. To his knowledge, the jail allowance in Suffex, the county in which he lived, was two pounds of bread a day; the original allowance had been only one pound; but on a late presentment, that a pound was not sufficient for the sustenance of the prisoners, the allowance had been doubled. He believed, also, that more than a pound of bread each day was allotted to the prisoners in most of the county jails in the kingdom. In Holland, whatever might be the case in France and Spain, he was pretty sure, the very contrary rule of feeding was in use, and that bread made the least portion of a Dutchman's meal. He meant no national reflection in what he was going to say, but he could not help observing, that Doctor Farquharson and the noble Lord in the black gown, came from a country, the habits of eating in which, in his mind, rendered them the last men to whose measurement of what was a fit portion of food for an Englishman he should be willing to subscribe. In Scotland it was notorious, the natives were accustomed to swallow but little solid meat, and that they could support nature with considerable less food than would suffice for an Englishman. He could not therefore suffer himself to be swayed by arguments proceeding from persons, who, however able they might be in other respects, did not appeal to him to be competent judges of the case in question. An American was in his mind an Englishman; he knew no distinction; and both ought to be fed alike. Their Lordships ought to be aware that an Englishman could not live on oatmeal; and if an Englishman could not, an American ought not to be expected to do so. But after all, the constant question would occur,

cur, ought an American prisoner to fare worse in this country than a French, Spanish, or Dutch prisoner? That question there was no getting over. The noble Lord had not said a word in answer to it. His Grace said, he knew it was a custom for great speakers to pass by that part of an argument which pinched most, and possibly it was to that, that he was to ascribe the noble Lords having never met the question, which he had just stated, and which he desired any other Lord had sent to answer.

Lord *Toughborough* said, he should be unworthy the attention their Lordships had shewn him, and should have no right to claim their notice on any future occasion, were he to suffer what had been said, in reply to his argument, to pass without an answer. The noble Duke had first charged him with having mistated a fact, and had defended his accusation by an argument of rather a singular nature. In order to prove that a pound of bread was not the usual jail allowance throughout the kingdom, his Grace had been pleased to state, that owing to a late presentment in the county of *Suffex*, the usual jail allowance in *Suffex* had had been doubled, and two pounds of bread allowed to each prisoner daily, instead of one pound; so that the noble Duke had admitted, that one pound had been the usual allowance in *Suffex*, in the very moment that he meant to establish the fact, that one pound was not the general allowance throughout the kingdom. In order to convince their Lordships, that he had not mistated a fact, he would repeat what he had said. His Lordship then minutely recapitulated that part of his argument, and afterwards said, that in *Yorkshire*, a county neither remarkable for its excess of liberality, nor noted for being a county inclined to starving, the jail allowance was something short of a pound of bread a day; this he knew, and he had a right to say he knew it, because the sheriff had lately reported to him as a judge that in *York Castle*, the prisoners allowance was as much short of one pound of bread each day as the difference in point of weight after it was baked amounted to. His Lordship said it was a little unfortunate for Doctor *Farquharson*, that he had been examined; the moment, however, that it became necessary to answer what he had offered in his first speech, the tables were turned, and poor Doctor *Farquharson* became the subject of ridicule as well as himself. With regard to what had been said about *Scotland*, the mode of diet there, oatmeal and the like, inferior as he was ready to confess himself to the noble Duke in every other respect, he could not

but feel, that by condescending to use such arguments, the noble Duke had rendered him so much his superior, and raised him so high above him, that he would disdain to make any reply.

Duke of
Richmond.

The Duke of *Richmond* rose again, and declared, he meant neither to throw out a national reflection, nor to say any thing personal, in what he had suggested respecting the manner of living in Scotland. He intended solely to state a fact, which he conceived he had a right to make advantage of in his argument. It was true, that Scotchmen were accustomed to a more spare diet than Englishmen; and let the noble Lord consider it in what light he chose, he should persist in stating it to be his opinion, that a man used from his infancy to a more moderate portion of food, than a man otherwise brought up, was not a fit judge of what ought to be a ration of provisions allotted to the latter. At the same time he did assure the noble Lord, he was as much above narrow prejudices, and as great an enemy to national distinctions, as he could be. He wished all mankind to live in a state of amity, and to consider each other as brethren; but in fair argument, he had ever conceived he was warranted in stating his sentiments, as they really occurred, and whether the noble Lord chose to treat them with disdain or not, he should continue to state them freely, and without reserve. His Grace once more challenged the House to surmount the difficulty of maintaining that it was either politic or just to make an humane distinction in the allowance of provisions to prisoners of war.

Lord Abing-
don.

Lord *Abingdon* asked, what right we had to make the Americans prisoners in the first instance, and called upon the noble Lords in office to prove that any such right existed?

Lord King.

Lord *King* argued on the inhumanity of treating those who had been our fellow-subjects worse than other prisoners of war, and contended, that however it might be supported in argument, that the French prisoners were intitled to distinction, it never could be maintained, that any distinction ought to be made between Dutch prisoners and American prisoners.

At length the question was put, and the House divided.
Contents 14, proxies 1; Not contents 47, proxies 19.

July 3.

The order of the day for going into a committee on Philip's powder bill being read, Lord Sandys took the chair, and several witnesses were examined,

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Mr. Grimwood, a gardener, was examined, who said, so far as his experiments had gone the powder answered extremely well.

Captain Lisle and two other witnesses were next called, whose testimony seemed rather favourable.

Earl *Bathurst* animadverted very fully on the evidence ^{de- Earl Bathurst.} delivered at the bar, and said, the efficacy of the powder had been so fully and satisfactorily proved, that he hoped the bill would meet with no farther interruption till passed into a law.

The Earl of *Sandwich* was equally warm and sanguine in his ^{Earl of Sandwich.} expectations. He trusted no more time would be spent in seeking other proofs, where none were wanting. It was true cavils might be raised, *ad infinitum*, but from the well known disposition of their Lordships nothing like that could be apprehended in such an assembly. Proofs had been sought; proofs had been given; and proofs had been received; after which he thought it extremely unnecessary to trouble the House with a single word more in support of a case so fully and completely made out.

Lord *Walsingham* said, he had at one time conceived as great Lord *Walsingham.* a predilection for the powder as the noble Earl who spoke last. When the matter was first started, the consideration of it was referred to the Board of Trade, where at the time he had the honour to have a seat. As far as the subject came properly before the Board, he must confess he was inclined to think favourably of it, and was led to believe it would answer the end proposed; but upon a closer investigation, and having since then received new lights on the subject, he had found strong reasons for altering his opinion; and though he did it with great diffidence, he was sorry to totally differ from the two noble Earls who had already spoke; for, so far from the evidence being full and complete, he conceived it to be the very reverse, and to be every way imperfect unsatisfactory, and incomplete. Such, therefore, being, in his opinion, the real state of the case, he wished that government would reward Mr. Philips upon farther proofs, or that, trusting to the efficacy of his powders, he might obtain a patent to reimburse him for his loss of time and trouble.

Earl *Ferrers* condemned the principle of the bill, in the ^{Earl Ferrers.} first instance, and totally disapproved of the objects it had in contemplation. He thought, at a season like the present, that the public money ought not to be so applied; and, be-

fore he entered into a consideration of the nature of the powder, the benefits which were to be derived from it, or the proofs in which its presumed efficacy was made to rest, he had set his face against the bill merely on account of the principle.

He assured their Lordships, that he had not acted entirely an idle part, for understanding it was a favourite purpose to be carried by Lords of great weight and respectability in that House, he had called that very morning at an eminent gardener's in Brompton, whom he had been informed made a trial of Mr. Philip's powder. He found him at home, and asked him how far the powder had succeeded in destroying ants, caterpillars, and other vermin, which are apt to infest gardens, and prove so extremely injurious to the interest of the cultivator? The gardener, in consequence of those questions, pointed out to him an apricot-tree, with its leaves withered and dropped, which tree he had dressed with the powder, agreeably to the directions which accompanied it.

The gardener, so far from thinking favourably, or even doubtfully of the powder, his Lordship said, was clearly of opinion that it was of a poisonous quality; and assured him, he would not eat the fruit which grew upon those trees which had been sprinkled with the powder on any consideration whatever.

If, where the process was so much more removed from the public danger arising from the noxious qualities of the powder, and the gardener had expressed such strong apprehensions, he thought it behoved their Lordships to be much more circumspect and careful where the powder was to be immediately mixed with the food of the men serving aboard his Majesty's ships of war. In ship-provisions, the mischief might be so extended, as to affect the health of many thousands, before any means of putting a stop to it could be devised; he therefore seriously exhorted their Lordships, to take care what farther steps they took in a business obviously attended with such infinite hazard and peril.

The Marquis of *Rockingham* coincided strongly in opinion with the noble Earl who spoke last.—He thought the evidence given at the bar might have been well spared, as it amounted to just nothing. If something more satisfactory did not still remain behind, he should not hesitate to say, that it was impossible their Lordships upon such proofs, could ever pass the bill. The session was just drawing to a period, the proofs as he observed before, were yet wanting;
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under such circumstances therefore, if Mr. Phillips was to be rewarded, at all events he saw no other mode of doing it, but by granting that gentleman, a patent; from whence, within a very few years, he must derive a most ample fortune, if his powder answered the expectation he and his friends had already formed of it.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he was not yet in the least persuaded, that the efficacy of the powder had been proved in any one instance. He said, he had received a letter from a Mr. Shields, an eminent nursery-man and gardener, the preceding evening, stating, that he had made various experiments with the powder, but it by no means answered. His Lordship hoped before the House consented to give away to large a sum of the public money, and as yet for seemingly an interested purpose, all the evidence which could be procured, either for or against, ought to be heard. In order therefore, that Mr. Shields might be examined, his Lordship moved, that the chairman leave the chair, and report progress.

Earl Bathurst opposed the motion very warmly, and said, *Earl Bathurst* he was surprised to hear the noble and learned Lord who spoke last, represent the bill as an object of private interest, merely calculated to serve an individual; when it was manifest, that the bill was in every possible sense of the word, a public one, and had been taken up upon the most clear, open, and unquestionable ground of public utility; no less an object, than that of preserving the health of our seamen against the bad effects which had been so often, so fatally felt aboard his Majesty's ships of war, where those vermin called weevils and cock-roaches, had, by mixing with the ships provisions, rendered them destructive to the health of the seamen.

As for postponing the bill to a future day, merely to hunt out evidence to defeat it, he believed it was a thing totally unusual. It had already been before the House for several days, and the not calling or preparing evidence to meet that given at the bar, was in his apprehension, giving the point up, unless the noble and learned Lord would come forward and say, that he would produce the testimony of other witnesses, which would be sufficient to overturn every thing hitherto advanced in favour of the bill.

Lord Dudley said, he felt himself hurt at something that noble Lord had fallen from the noble and learned Lord; as if those noble Lords who had approved of and supported the bill, acted from private or interested motives. All he could say

in answer and in justice to himself, he could not in his opinion say less, was, that whatever question came before him, in his legislative capacity, he considered and determined upon it as a free and independent Peer of Parliament. He never was an advocate for any man, or any bill, as the noble and learned Lord had suggested, but in every question which came before him, determined agreeably to his conscience, and as far as he was able to judge, for the good of his country.

Lord Chan-
cellor.

The Lord Chancellor observed, that the noble Lord who spoke last, had so exactly described him, that it was impossible for him to pass by unnoticed what had fallen from his Lordship. He wished sincerely the noble Lord had attended more carefully to what he said when last up; if he had, he was persuaded he would have been saved the trouble of the present explanation. His Lordship denied that he had by insinuation, invendo, or direct expression, asserted any thing so scandalous against any one of their Lordships. It would have been a gross reflection upon them as members of that House; it would have been a gross violation of the established rules of debate; and it would, were he capable of uttering the like, be a daring and unprovoked insult put upon the whole body of the peerage. Such an idea was abhorrent to his nature, and as the charge bore such a complexion, he thought any noble Lord, who in the hurry of debate might feel himself hurt, should be extremely cautious, in charging another noble Lord with what must stick to fast, if it should stick at all.

His Lordship gave the substance of the letter he received from Shields, said he understood Mr. Phillips's powder had raised a dust in both Houses, but after repeated trials, the powder had failed. He read the material circumstances as they stood in the letter, which in every instance, as far as the experiments were made, proved the inefficacy of the powder.

The question was then put. Contents, 15; non-contents, 15.

The Earl of Sandwich seeing the numbers were equal, agreed that that the Lord Chancellor's motion, and the farther consideration of the bill, should be deferred till Tuesday next.

July 4.

Public business in course. No Debate.

July

July 5.

As soon as the commissioners were robed, a message was sent to the Commons, desiring their attendance while his Majesty's commission was reading, authorizing any three or more Peers to notify the royal assent to such bills as were then ready. Accordingly, when the Speaker and House came to the bar, the royal assent was notified to the Vote of Credit, Sinking Fund, Cocoa Nut, Almanac, Exchequer Ballances, Hemp and Flax, Longitude, and to about ten other public and private bills.

The order of the day for going into a committee on a bill to amend and explain an act of the 17th of his present Majesty, to promote the residence of the parochial clergy, was read, and Lord Walsingham took the chair. Several amendments were proposed and adopted, and the bill ordered to be reported.

As soon as the House was resumed, the Earl of Abingdon rose, and gave notice, that he should move, on Tuesday next, for the second reading of the Bill for repealing certain clauses in the Marriage Act, and thought it necessary, that their lordships should be summoned for that day.

The Lord Chancellor leaving the woolfack, said, that the motion was, in his mind, extremely improper, for it would be premature to bring on the consideration of so important a bill at present, when several Lords, not expecting it, were of course unprepared to speak upon it: as for his own part, if all their Lordships had already weighed the matter as much in their minds as he happened to have done in his, he would not feel the least difficulty in moving to put off the second reading of the bill for three months: but as it was possible that their Lordships might not have, as yet, turned their thoughts to it, so he would not deprive them by a hasty motion, of an opportunity of speaking to the merits of the bill. For his part, he did not intend to enter into the merits; it was sufficient for him that so very important a question ought not to be agitated in the middle of July. Many of their Lordships might recollect the abuses that existed before the Marriage Act was introduced: they were so striking, that the House of Peers had directed the judges to bring in a bill to remedy them; the bill was brought in, but as it happened not to prove unexceptionable to the House, it did not pass. In the next session of parliament, another bill to correct the same abuses was brought in, and underwent the

the most solemn discussion in both Houses, before it passed into a law : that law had now existed twenty-eight years ; and the nation was familiarized to its forms : their Lordships would therefore be backward to make any alterations in it, until it should have been proved that such alterations were necessary. He by no means contended that the law was proper in every respect ; or that some provisions in the bill to amend it might not be very desirable ; but his great objection to the bill was, that there was not, at present, time to enter into as ample a discussion of the subject as it required ; and therefore he was ready to confess, that on that ground he would oppose the bill on Tuesday next. He entertained a great deal of respect for the honourable gentleman who was the author of the bill ; but he could not carry his respect so far as to let a bill of such importance pass at so late a period of the session, without doing every thing in his power to prevent it.

Lord Abingdon.

Lord Abingdon replied, that it was his opinion that the bill ought to pass this session ; and he trusted that he should be able to lay such facts before their Lordships as would afford the most irresistible arguments in favour of the bill. But as he knew he was not equal to a contest with the noble and learned Lord who spoke last, he would commit his thoughts to paper, and read them to the House on Tuesday.

The motion was then put and carried ; and it was ordered that the Lords be summoned to attend the second reading on that day.

Lord Hillsborough.

Lord Hillsborough having moved the order of the day, for the second reading of the East India Bill, the Duke of Chandos rose and said, well aware as he was, of the delicacy of the ground he was about to take, and of the objections generally made against any noble Lord's opposing a Bill of Supply, he could not conscientiously avoid rising to oppose the bill, for the second reading of which, the noble Earl had just moved their Lordships. At the same time he trusted, that the House would not impute his doing so to any peevish inclination to object to every bill that came before them, or to any wish to embarrass Government, by endeavouring to prevent a bill's passing, which would put a large sum of money immediately into their power. He knew perfectly well, that such was the exigency of affairs, that it was the duty of Parliament to strengthen the King's hands as much as possible, to enable him, if not to subdue his numerous and

powerful

powerful enemies, as least to carry on the war in such a manner as should ensure us a speedy and an honourable peace. He knew also that the hands of government could not be so well strengthened by any other means as by cheerfully granting large, though necessary supplies, in order to enable the executive branch of the legislature to make the most vigorous and effectual efforts, the better to give success to the operations of the present expensive and wide extended war. If, however, the national resources were exhausted, and Great Britain must sink, he could not but anxiously wish, that she might sink with honour, and not in the moment of her decline disgrace herself by acts that carried with them indelible marks of ignominy and infamy. The present bill, he must contend, was not a bill of supply; it was a bill of robbery and rapine: It took that by force, the claim to which, at any rate, was neither made out nor admitted. He was far from meaning to deny, that the public had a right to a participation in the profits of the East India Company. He knew they had such a right; but then the extent of it ought to be established to the satisfaction and conviction of both parties before any participation was made. At a period of the session like the present, when the greatest part of the noble Lords who made up that House, fatigued with the labour and long continuance of the session, had left town, and could not give their attendance, a bill of so much consequence as the bill then under consideration, ought not to be brought before their Lordships; and the more especially, at the time which had been chosen for introducing the bill into the other House; viz. just after the company had received the severest blow that had ever been struck against them in India; the effect of which blow and its consequences they neither knew, nor could foretell at the time, nor indeed at this moment.

Having dwelt for some short time on arguments similar to the above, his Grace went into a long and diffusive discussion of the conduct of administration, the expenditure of the public money, the want of system visible in the conduct of Ministers, and other topics, that have come under frequent consideration in the course of the session.

His Grace asserted, that either administration had formed no system of government, or if there was any system formed, it was of so singular and secret a nature, that it was known but to one individual in office, and either dared not face the light, or was incapable of being brought forward. He com-

plained of the lavish expenditure of the public money, in daily jobs calculated to serve the creatures of administration, and said the contractors, on whom the public money was profusely bestowed, were the weevils of our resources. He wished for a power still more efficacious than that of Mr. Philips, to destroy those noxious vermin, which occasioned such violent blasts to the finances of the kingdom. He concluded, with declaring, that he should oppose the second reading of the bill.

Earl of

Hillsborough

The *Earl of Hillsborough* said, as he had moved the second reading of the bill, he would trouble their Lordships with a very few words in answer to what they had just heard from the noble Duke.

The noble Duke, in the speech which he had been pleased to make that day, had, in his opinion, spoken a long time to a great variety of topics, which had no relation whatever to the bill in question, but to the bill itself he had said very little indeed. With regard to that part of the noble Duke's speech which did refer to the bill, the noble Duke must excuse him, if he declared he thought it had been prepared for a bill very different from that under consideration. It appeared to him, to apply rather to a compulsive bill which had been talked of in the world, than to the bill actually before their Lordships. So far from the present bill being, as the noble Duke had declared it to be, a bill of robbery and rapine, the bill was directly and diametrically the reverse; nor could he better answer the noble Duke, nor prove the assertion he had just made, more strongly, than by reading to their Lordships a short extract from the bill itself.

His Lordship then read, that part of the preamble which sets forth, that on the 26th day of June last, a petition from the General Court of Proprietors of East India-Stock, had been presented to the House of Commons, in which the General Court declared themselves desirous of renewing their charter on certain conditions and regulations thereafter stipulated, and which conditions and regulations made up the several clauses of the bill. His Lordship having read the whole of the necessary extract, observed, it was thence evident, that the bill was not what the noble Duke had represented it to be, a bill of robbery and rapine; but that on the contrary, it was a bill tending to authorize and sanction an agreement mutually and cordially settled between the parties. With regard to the other topics on which the noble Duke had expatiated, he said, they were so thread-bare, and the arguments,

arguments, such as they were, which the noble Duke had condescended to use, had been refuted so often, (having been contradicted and disproved again and again) that he would not trouble their Lordships any farther; the noble Duke therefore, must excuse his passing them over in silence. His Lordship moved, that the bill be read a second time; which motion was carried without a division.

July 6.

The order of the day for the second reading of the bill for indemnifying the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, for all acts done contrary, or in disobedience to the orders, proceedings, and determinations of the Supreme Courts of Justice in that province, being moved,

Lord *Abingdon* rose to oppose it, and said, "My Lords, I ^{Lord Abingdon.} rise to move to your Lordships, that the consideration of this bill be put off to this day two months; I do so, my Lords, merely from what I see in the title page of it, and without entering at all into all the laboured intricacy and seeming undigested chaos of its contents; contents, my Lords, that to digest, would bring your Lordships to the hour of another session of parliament without finishing this. The part of the title page alluded to, is this: 'And also for indemnifying the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, and all officers who have acted under their orders or authority, in the resistance made to the process of the Supreme Court.' My Lords, was there ever such a title page to a bill before? all the volumes of your statute books, undigested and voluminous as they are, will not give you such an example. An act of parliament passes appointing a Supreme Court of Judicature in India. Now an act of parliament passes to indemnify resistance to that Court. My Lords, there are cases where resistance is the law of the land. The case of America is such a case. But those cases want no indemnification. This case, however, it seems does, and therefore, my Lords, we must have time to consider it. My Lords, I move your Lordships, that the consideration of this bill be deferred to this day two months.

The Earl of *Radnor* seconded the motion on the grounds of the arbitrary and despotic powers with which it armed the Governor and Supreme Council of Bengal. The conduct of the officers of the East India Company in their settlements had been for many years the disgrace of the empire as well as its bane. They had, by acts of unparalleled oppression,

pression, accumulated fortunes of a princely nature by acts which degraded them from the rank and character of men, and which brought deserved obloquy on the nation to which they belonged. To check these inhuman practices, the act he complained of had passed, if it was true, as he believed in some instances it was, that the Supreme Court had gone to lengths by which they were unwarranted by the charter of their establishment, it was certainly in the power of Parliament to make regulations for their good government, without doing that violence to the constitution which in his opinion the present bill was calculated to effectuate. He should always consider the laws of this country as the best suited the Legislature to dispense, and the subject of Britain in all her extended territories to enjoy. He did not think it either wise or justifiable in Parliament to pass this hasty law on the evidence of one of the parties interested in the establishment of this form of government. They ought to hear the parties accused in their own justification, they ought to deliberate with great caution on the business, and not in the conclusion of a most tedious session pass it into a law without much attention, or any just knowledge of the facts and nature of the question. Their Lordships ought to reflect, that this act was to influence the lives, the happiness, and the fortunes of a number of people, to set a number that would hardly form in our minds an idea of the operation of this act. What numbers must it not involve in slavery, what numbers must it not deliver into the hands of the Governor and Council; into the hands of those men who have been, as he said, those who had already brought disgrace on this country and on human nature by their repeated acts of violence! The check upon them was exceedingly inadequate, and ought undoubtedly to be rendered more equal to the importance of the trust.

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Lord *Sturges* rose to defend the bill. He said, that the principle of the laws of England was so opposite to the laws, customs, and religion of the inhabitants of the East Indies, that it would be madness to introduce our laws among them. What man in his senses would think of binding Mahometans and Gentoos by laws that were made for the government of Christians? The British laws were excellent no doubt; and no one could deny that he did; but it was because he felt them to be excellent that he would not introduce them in India. for why were they found excellent in England? It was because they were congenial with our con-
stitution

stitution, habits, customs, prejudices and religion ; and that was the reason why they must be disagreeable to Gentoos and Mahometans ; for as they militated strongly against their laws, habits and religion, they must deem it tyranny to be governed by them. The Tartar, the savage conqueror of China, was prudent enough not to impose his laws upon that empire, but suffered it to be ruled by those laws to which the Chinese had been long familiarized. We were conquerors, and hard ones too ; for we shewed ourselves more imprudent, more rash, and more cruel, than those Tartars whom we might please to call Barbarians. He meant not to throw the least blame upon the Judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature ; on the contrary, he was willing to admit that they had acted with the most upright intention ; but still he must say, that they extended their jurisdiction so far that the Governor and Council had been at last obliged to oppose their orders, to preserve those settlements which were allowed on all hands to be precious to this country. However, though they had undoubtedly acted for the best, yet as they had acted against law, it was fit that they should be indemnified for their intentions ; and it was also necessary they should be armed with such powers, as should enable them to preserve the tranquility of the settlements : and though it was intended that they should have a certain portion of arbitrary power, still care had been taken to make such provisions in the bill as should make them careful not to abuse it ; and this was by making them responsible to the Courts of this country for their conduct. From all these considerations, he hoped their Lordships would not concur with the noble Lord, who had moved to put off the bill.

Lord *Abington* rose again, and added some more observations against the bill ; he talked of certain matters contained in it being of the sort which would justify impeachments, and declared he meant to make them the ground-work of impeachment of his Majesty's ministers, when the season should be ripe for it. Ld. *Abington*

The Lord Chancellor said, the noble Earl who spoke first, and the noble Earl who spoke second, had made an impression on his mind, and taught him that much might be advanced of a very serious nature, both for and against the bill. The objection first stated by the noble Earl, who opened the debate, carried great weight with it, and several of the objections taken by the other noble Earl were also entitled to attention. He made no scruple to say, that he

for one should be ready to contend for putting off the bill till another session, when it could be discussed more seriously and more amply, were it not, as the noble Viscount in the green ribbon had observed, absolutely necessary that the evil, stated to have occasioned the bill, should have an immediate parliamentary cure.

There was at this time a civil war, as it were, carrying on in India, between the Supreme Court of Judicature and the Governor-General and Council. Such a warfare could not but involve in it all our Indian concerns, and produce consequences that must necessarily be extremely mischievous. The urgency therefore of the case, called upon parliament to apply a temporary remedy, for he acknowledged the present was no better. He lamented, that a bill of such real importance had not been brought in earlier in the session. With regard to several of the objections that had been stated, many of them (he spoke it with great submission to the noble Earl from whom they came) appeared to him to be rather objections that went to the parts and clauses of the bill, than objections that applied immediately to the principle. He would therefore hope, that every noble Lord, as well as those who had spoken against the bill, as the noble Viscount, who had so ably and so clearly shewn the great necessity or the House agreeing to pass it, would consent that it should go to a Committee, and when it was before the House in that stage, and under investigation, clause by clause, he did not despair of rendering the whole unobjectionable, by a few short amendments. He said, farther, that he agreed with the noble Earl in the validity of his objection, when he had stated that a despotic power ought not to be lodged, if possible, any where; but if it was at any time requisite, it ought to be as guardedly delegated as possible, and the conduct arising from it to be rendered subject to revision and examination, of one kind or other, somewhere. A government having, in its principle, arbitrary power, was undoubtedly obnoxious to the understanding and feelings of every Englishman; but then it ought to be remembered, that where a government of that nature was to be exercised, in consequence of the present bill, the persons subject to it were no strangers to arbitrary power; they had lived from their cradles in the habits of accommodating their conduct to despotic sway, and they would feel it as no hardship whatever. His Lordship went through every clause cursorily, stating the most pressing objections, and shewing what
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fort of amendments might do them away. In regard to the arbitrary power, he thought execution in cases of life, and sentence in other cases, might be staid, upon a regular application, and wait till an appeal was decided on here in England. He concluded with pressing their Lordships to suffer the bill to go to a Committee.

Lord *Radnor* rose again, and gave his consent to the noble *Ld. Radnor* Lord's requisition: he then entered into the discussion of the clause, vesting an arbitrary power in the Governor and Council; and said, whenever he found it unavoidably necessary to vest an arbitrary power any where, he should choose to vest it in one person, and not in a number. Their Lordships might see, by an examination of the records of the Governor and Council, that what was done at one time by a small majority was contradicted and undone afterwards by three or four others. His Lordship added, that he thought it was wiser and safer to lodge absolute power in the breast of one man, and to make that man responsible, and if he should deserve it, punishable for his conduct.

The Lord Chancellor made a short reply.

Lord *Abingdon* also spoke a third time, and said arbitrary *Ld. Abingdon* power was incompatible with our constitution. Great Britain was a free state, and it was a solecism in term for a free state to grant an arbitrary power. The one and the other could not exist together.

On the question being put, the bill was read a second time, and committed for Monday.

A short conversation passed after the second reading, relative to the choice of a day for the commitment of the bill. Lord *Abingdon* wished to have all the papers before the House, on which the House of Commons had passed the bill. The Lord Chancellor shewed, that it was impossible to say, whether those papers were necessary or not, till the bill was before the House in a Committee.

July 9.

As soon as prayers were over, witnesses were examined, and Counsel called to the bar on the bill for warehousing sugars.

The Counsel being withdrawn, Lord *Grantham* rose, *Lord Gran-* and observed, that by what appeared in evidence, and argu- *them* ment at the bar, there arose several questions which required much serious deliberation, much more than it was possible it could receive at so late a period of the session; he therefore moved

moved that said bill be taken into farther consideration on that day month, which motion was unanimously agreed to.

The second order of the day was then read for the House to go into a committee on the Bengal Judicature bill, Lord Sandys accordingly took the chair of the committee.

Lord Chancellor.

The *Lord Chancellor* then rose, and made several pointed observations on the necessity of a bill such as the present, in principle, but different in the provisions; some of which he said, and endeavoured to prove, had partly a doubtful, and partly a dangerous tendency.

Earl Mansfield.

Lord *Mansfield* endeavoured to obviate the material objections, and to reconcile the present bill with that passed the 13th of his present Majesty, in point of ultimate jurisdiction.

Lord Chancellor.

The *Lord Chancellor* replied, and seemed to appeal to Lord Loughborough, (they were both at the time the law officers, of the Crown) whether the objections he had taken were not well founded.

Lord Loughborough.

Lord *Loughborough* wished to peruse and compare both bills, or the present bill with the existing law.

Id. Mansfield.

Lord *Mansfield*, in a short speech, made farther observations on the bill.

At length, by a kind of compromise, the Lord Chancellor moved, that the chairman do leave the chair, and report progress.

Id. Loughborough.

Lord *Loughborough* said one day could make no difference. The other orders of the day were postponed, and the House adjourned at half after six o'clock to the next day.

July 10.

Earl of Sandwich.

The order of the day to go into a committee, upon Philips's Powder bill being read, the Earl of *Sandwich* rose and observed, that so many reports had gone forth relative to the inefficacy of Mr. Philips's powder, and so many differences had arisen among their Lordships on the subject, that the bill, though sufficiently important to claim their Lordships warmest attention, was not of importance enough, in his mind, to take up so much of their Lordships time at so advanced a period of the session. He should therefore, when every moment of their Lordship's time became so precious, content himself with an Address to his Majesty, that the result of the several experiments which have or shall be made aboard his Majesty's ships of war be laid before that House at the opening of the next session of Parliament.

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His Lordship followed up this motion with another, that the farther consideration of the bill be deferred till that day three weeks or a month. His Lordship farther declared, that he had no wish one way or the other, unless so far as the public were likely to derive a benefit from the invention, and if after the documents which he now moved for, were produced, it should be found that the inventor had deceived himself, he would be as sanguine as any one noble Lord, who heard him, in rejecting the whole, and in endeavouring to let aside Mr. Philips's intentions.

The Marquis of *Rockingham* objected to the form of the Address to the Crown.—He saw no reason, now, when the witnesses were waiting to be examined, and all the proofs before the Lordships to postpone the business any longer. A few days since such a motion might have been proper, it would have saved then Lordships a great deal of time and useless attendance, but when the merits of the bill, were at issue, in his apprehension, the motion was premature.

He could see no ground for making his Majesty a party in the business. It was unnecessary, if not disrespectful. Besides, he was astonished to hear the noble Earl doubt, for the first time, of the efficacy of the powder, after he had asserted in his place, that he had already purchased from the inventor no less than one hundred ton of it for the use of the navy!

His Lordship concluded, with assuring his Lordship that he should oppose the motion, but he presumed, the noble Earl relied for the success of the first merely on the merit of the second, that of postponing the farther consideration of the bill till the next session of Parliament.

Earl *Ferrers* pressed for the immediate examination of the Fuel *Ferrers* with fish.

The question being put upon Lord Sandwich's motion, the House divided. Contents 21, not contents 13.

His Lordship next moved, his other motion, and changed it for that day three weeks.

Lord *Abingdon* addressed their Lordships in the following words “Conceiving the bill that is now before us, to be in this hour of much-wanted reformation one of the great desiderata of the state, I am come down, supposing it to meet my idea, to give it my most hearty support.”

“The bill, my Lords, I conceive to be a bill stating the invention of a powder for the destroying of vermin; and my idea is, that these vermin, are the vermin of the Court, that is to say, the vermin that have been ever since the commence-

ment of the American war, sucking the blood and preying upon the vitals of this nation ; such as contractors under (in the true *Lincoln* system) all their different *classes, genera, and species*, jobbers, place-mongers, bank-note, or ready-money parliamentary-men, loanists, or otherwise called scrip-men, with all the other various variety, which, from the want of acquaintance with the natural history of this creation I am unable to name.

“ I say then, my Lords, if this be the object of this bill, I hope your Lordships will think that I shall be most sincere in my support of it, nor can I suppose that there is a single Lord in this House, who will not lend me his aid upon this occasion ; especially, when your Lordships consider that, in this case, it is with the body politic, exactly the same as it is with the body natural : the more beggarly a beggar is, the greater number of vermin he has always about him ; and just so it is with the state at present, the more it is impoverished, the more it is sunk, the more beggarly it is, (thanks be to the Minister) the more is it to be surrounded with, the more do they cling about it ; the faster do they flick upon it, and the more is it to be eaten up alive, and devoured by these vermin.

“ But now, my Lords, having said this, I am afraid I have been forming an expectation of this bill, which is not at the bottom of it ; but on the contrary, that instead of intending to destroy jobbers, this bill is the most arrant job of itself in the world, and not only so, but the most shameful imposition that ever was attempted to be put upon the legislature of this or any other country ; so shameful, my Lords, that I can consider it in no other light, than as a trial (by playing a mere boyish trick with us) to see how far, and to what length the Parliament of England will suffer itself to be duped and imposed upon ; for, my Lords, taking this bill in its true light, what is the object of it ? The object of it is to destroy vermin by means of a powder that has been invented for the purpose : but how, my Lords, is this to be done ? is the powder to operate by fascination ? Is it to act of itself ? is it to be its own distributor ? No, my Lords, no such thing ; but how then is it to be done ? Why, my Lords, as I understand, it is to be done in the manner in which when we were boys at school, we were taught to catch birds, by putting salt upon their tails, and so putting this boyish trick upon us : as for instance, to catch a bird, you are to put salt upon its tail, and so to kill an insect, you are to put this powder upon it ; and then, my Lords, you are told with a great deal of gravity, that this is a secret, and that for this

secret.

secret? We are to pay the sum of three thousand six hundred pounds net money. Yes, my Lords, it is for a secret; it is the secret that has been long since wasting and exhausting the treasure of this country. I am told, my Lords, that this is no secret, for I read it in the public papers; that Mr. Pinchbeck, commonly called Patent forgers Pinchbeck, is to be a jobber in this job; and here let the secret, my Lords, a secret that may lead to the discovery of a great many others, and much greater jobs and secrets than this is.—But, now, my Lords, returning more immediately to the point before us, I will, with your Lordships permission, give the House some information that has come to my knowledge, respecting this Philippic powder (as it may well be called; for, in killing vermin, it creates Philippics that may be of use in directing your Lordships judgments upon this bill.—It seems, my Lords, that the French as well as British West-India islands, having been of late years so much afflicted with vermin as most materially to injure their crops, very great rewards were offered to any person that would undertake the cure of the evil. And this, probably, my Lords, was the motive that first set Mr. Phillips's inventive genius to work. But, my Lords, be this as it may, Mr. Philips, in search of the reward that was held out to the public by the British West-India islands, did think fit to make an offer of his services to the body of West-India planters and merchants in the city of London; of which the consequence was, that a committee of planters and merchants were appointed to enquire into Mr. Philips' pretensions as to the undertaking; and they being so appointed, and the parties met, the following was the issue of business: Mr. Philips was asked by the committee in what manner his powder was to be used? He answered, by strewing it over the surface of the land. He was then asked to what depth ought it to be laid upon the land? He said, about the eighth part of an inch. The next question then was, what was the price of his powder? He answered, if much of it was wanted, the price of it was a guinea per hundred weight. In possession then of these facts, the next proceeding of the committee was, to calculate by the quantity that was wanted for an acre of land what the expence of the powder would be per acre; and it appeared that the quantity of powder necessary to strew over an acre of land, the eighth part of an inch deep, would amount in price, at a guinea per hundred weight, to three hundred and fifty guineas; a price more than six times the value of the fee simple of an acre of land, whilst at the same time, the

experiment remained to be tried upon the neighbouring acre, equally effected with vermin; and so on from acre to acre, wherever the vermin were to be found.—I need not, nor thinks, my Lords, tell your Lordships what was the report of this committee to their body. It certainly was not what this bill reports to us from the House of Commons. From the House of Commons, Mr. Philips is sent up to us to demand three thousand six hundred pounds. From the committee of West-India planters and merchants, Mr. Philips was dismissed with a flea in his ear, that he might make use of his powder upon himself, and not upon them.—

I trust, my Lords, that we shall follow the example of the planters and merchants, in preference to that of the House of Commons, and in so doing, give Mr. Philips another flea in his ear for the use of his powder. There is one thing, my Lords, I had forgot to mention. It was said in the committee of West-India planters and merchants, that Mr. Philips's experiments, carried into use, would be a good way of paying off the national debt. Possibly this may be the secret between the minister and Mr. Philips, for which Mr. Philips is to be rewarded. If so, my Lords, I beg pardon for having troubled your Lordships, and I recant what I have said.

The House then went into a committee on the Bengal Judicature bill, and after altering some, and totally omitting others, the Lord Chancellor moved that the House be resumed, the chairman ordered to report progress, and the committee to proceed the next day.

July 11.

This day previous to the House being made, a long conversation took place between the two law Lords present [the Lord Chancellor and Lord Loughborough] and some others, supposed to be interested in the question which was expected to come on.

At half after four o'clock, the order of the day was read, for the House to go into a committee on the Bengal Judicature bill, on which Lord Sandys took the chair of the committee.

Lord Chancellor.

One or two clauses of the bill having been read, the *Lord Chancellor* rose and made a most able and learned speech. He observed, that the bill came from the other House in 2 particular form, and so framed, that he was sorry he could not agree with it, though he sincerely believed it was well intended,

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The clauses or provisions which he should move to leave out might be deemed by some persons the most relative and essential in promoting the intended effect, and obtaining the objects of the law. It might possibly be urged, that he did not combat the principle of the bill, though he objected to some of the provisions; consequently, that notwithstanding any objection he might now make, he totally approved of the principle. This point was what in his opinion called upon him for a particular and precise explanation; and this, according to his apprehension, could not be done without having reference to the law passed the 13th of his present Majesty, which had, in fact, given birth to the bill now before their Lordships.

Let us see, said his Lordship, what was the evil complained of at that time, and what was the remedy applied. The principal evil was, that the company's servants, and others, deriving right, powers, and authorities under the Company, had been guilty of very great enormities and oppressions, as well over his Majesty's new as his native subjects. There was scarcely any species of oppression, or public or private malversation, which had not been committed under those powers; and there can be little doubt but those complaints, numerous as they were, and aggravated in some instances as they must have been, had much, I fear greatly too much foundation in truth. The reason which gave rise to the interference of the English legislature, however disagreeable that interference on some accounts might be, was this; that the very persons, their dependents, or those whom they had an interest in protecting, or thought fit to protect, who were authors of those oppressions, were the very people who, under the former constitution, were invested with the power of hearing, and ultimately giving judgment, or administering redress to the injured party or parties.

In framing the former law, two principle objects presented themselves to the British legislature. The first to protect the British native subjects resident on the spot from the persecution of their superiors, or those acting immediately under the authority of the Company; the other, to shield the poor natives, strangers alike to our laws, religion, civil polity, and constitution, from the injuries and wrongs they were liable daily to suffer, either from the government there, the persons employed by them, or individuals. There was besides, another original defect in the chartered constitution; which was, that there being no superior court in the country,

try, deriving its powers immediately from the Crown, if any act of rapine, oppression, or any other species of injustice was committed, there was not even a possibility of obtaining redress or satisfaction for the injured, so long as the wrong doer chose to remain in the country. It was true, that as soon as the injured and injured came home, the latter had the law open to him; but whether in India or England, all redress was precluded till the wrong doer returned to this country. This impediment stood equally in the way of the native Hindoo and the British subject.

To remedy the evil here described, it was thought proper to create a jurisdiction in the court of King's-bench, for the purpose of opening the door to justice; that is to say, if any injury had been committed in India, to give the new court of judicature, created or established by the same act in Bengal or Calcutta, a power of taking cognizance of such offence, whether the parties were in Britain or India; and if any of the material witnesses or parties happened to be in England, in that case, to empower the court of King's-bench here to take depositions, &c. from the persons concerned, and that the same might be transmitted to the Supreme court at Bengal, in order to enable that court to give final judgment.

This, I take it, was one of the main objects of the bill, whether applied to the several descriptions I have alluded to, or the specific powers, authorities, jurisdictions, and persons I have pointed out.

It will not be improper, I presume, to remind your Lordships once more, that the evils were two fold, as was likewise the remedy; for if your Lordships will only attend, whether one or both the parties were absent from India, the person injured had it in his power to obtain redress; and in the other instance, so far as the law respected the native of Bengal, though his oppressor was in England, by appealing from the place of his residence, the proceedings arising from the new legal power vested in the court of King's-bench, by process in that court here, and transmitted to the Supreme court in Bengal, there was no let or hindrance whatever to the effectual and full distribution of justice.

Upon this clear and equitable intention, the law of the 13th of his present Majesty, for the better government of the territories of the East India Company was passed, and a Supreme court of criminal, as well as civil judicature, erected in that country, at least so far as the same could be considered to be applicable to particular purposes; the supposed im-

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proper exercise of which judicature is the ground of the present bill.

Your Lordships may wish to know perhaps, before I proceed farther, why I should endeavour to throw any impediments in the way of the passing of the present bill, after I have declared my opinion, that the evils complained of, call strongly for a remedial law to remove or correct them. It is sufficient for me to say, before I proceed farther in assigning my reasons, why I think a remedy is wanting; that I likewise am persuaded that, considering the vast importance of the bill, the probable state of that country while I am speaking, the necessity there exists for doing something, and the infinite danger or probable mischiefs there may arise from doing too much; it would be equally imprudent and impolitic to pass the bill in the shape it came to us from the other House, as it would be to totally reject it. And now, if your Lordships will give me leave, I will endeavour to elucidate more fully what I mean.

The design of the law of the 13th of his present Majesty, never did or could mean, because it would be preposterous so to do, to create a general, indiscriminate, unqualified jurisdiction over the people; nay, over even the governmental power of the country, the supreme council and governor general. The laws of this country were intended only to affect the British or natural born British subjects, and to protect the Indians or natives from all sort of injury. It was never in the contemplation of the British legislature to compel the natives to be bound by our municipal laws relative to property; their manners, habits, religion, in short every one circumstance which related to them as men or citizens, loudly and peremptorily forbid it. It was consequently truly preposterous and absurd to impose upon the natives such laws, as in many instances they could not obey, in more they could not comprehend, and which, however wise or just in themselves, they must detest, as originating in a spirit of persecution, and founded in the highest injustice.

In another point of view, the disagreement between the governor and council and the supreme court I look upon to be a particular misfortune. I am not now deciding, which was originally in the wrong, or whether both of them may not have been so. It is enough for me, that either they acted agreeably to the powers vested in them, or stretched the powers they were vested with, in order to prevent what they might have deemed a greater evil. In either event, I am
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not prepared to go the whole length the bill proposes. It is possible, that the powers proposed by this bill, to be vested in the governor general may hereafter become necessary. It is not improbable, but the jurisdiction of the supreme court will be limited in some instance, and require to be enlarged in others; but, besides the want of evidence on both sides, as I observed before, at so late a stage of the session, and consequently with so slender an attendance, I cannot say that I can, consistent with my duty, agree to the bill, unless the clauses I have already pointed out are omitted.

It may be said, and perhaps with great justice, that something ought to be done. I am ready to grant, that the evil, whether of a greater or less magnitude, ought to be considered, and that measures, such as may promise to quiet the minds of the complainants and injured, should be adopted. To effect that purpose I am ready to go as far as any man ^{is} ~~ought~~ ^{ought} to wish to do, but no farther. I would recommend ^{that} ~~the~~ this business taken up the next session, and fully and gravely discussed. At present, after the clauses proposed by me to be struck out are omitted, there will be enough of the bill left remaining to answer all the purposes of a temporary suspension of the evils complained of. The Governor at one time will have it in his power to effectually discharge all the duties of his high station; the Judges will be reinstated, *pro tempore* in the exercise of every part but what is deemed the oppressive powers of their jurisdiction; and your Lordships will come fully prepared to consider a question, which in every point it can be viewed, seems to be worthy of your most serious consideration.

His Lordship then offered several amendments to be inserted, instead of the clauses omitted for putting a stop, or rendering of none effect, all prosecutions of the nature therein described, which have been, or may hereafter be instituted in the Supreme Court of Bengal, from the year 1780, and until the conclusion of the next session of Parliament.

The bill being gone through, the amendments were ordered to be reported. Adjourned.

July 12.

Previous to moving the order of the day, for the second reading of the new marriage-bill, commonly called Mr. Fox's Marriage Bill, the Earl of *Abington* addressed the House to the following effect:

Earl of
Abington.

My

My Lords, although I rise to give my countenance and support to this bill, it is not because it is such a bill as either meets my approbation, or obtains my wishes; and, my Lords, for this reason: That when any measure is in itself wrong, no modification of that measure can make it right: it is the removal of the measure itself only that can cure the evil. Upon this principle then, my Lords, and inasmuch as this bill is intended to make that which is very bad a little better; so upon this principle, this bill cannot meet either my approbation or wishes. Instead of a modification of the marriage act, if it had been a bill of repeal in *toto* , in that case my approbation and wishes, like the measure itself, had been compleat; but as this is not the case, we must take the good and leave the bad; we must look to the light, and shut our eyes against the dark parts of this bill; and if a man and a woman, though called up by nature, that is, if *hucusque ad matrimonium* cannot propagate their species (because forbidden by a positive law) at fourteen or twelve years of age, it is better that they should do so at eighteen and sixteen, than be prevented from coming together till they are twenty-one. It is in this light I look upon the bill; and it is upon this ground, my Lords, that I support it.

But now, my Lords, I have said this, I know I am calling down the aristocratic indignation of some in this House upon me: but this, my Lords, is by no means any matter of dismay to me. As a rule of legislation it is laid down, "that there are two interests; the interest of the whole, and the interest of the particular: that the interest of the former is great and noble, but that the interest of the latter is mean and scandalous." It is by this legislative rule that my legislative conduct will, I trust, ever be guided. It is by this rule that it is guided upon the present occasion, and perhaps there is no occasion that can occur which more peremptorily calls for the exercise of this rule than the present. The act which this bill means to modify, the Marriage Act, as it is called, was (as my Lords the Bishops know) like Doctor Graham's celestial bed, made for the few, and not for the many; for us, my Lords, and not for the benefit of the nation; and therefore, as a legislator, wherever I met with this principle, although numbered among the few myself, my preference will always be given to the many; for the interest of the whole is great and noble, whilst the interest of the particular is mean and scandalous. And now, my Lords, with respect to the doctrine upon

the act itself, to which this bill alludes, although of no very long date, its demerits have been so often discussed, as well on its own account, as on the account of its ill-begotten child the Royal Marriage Act, and are so pointedly marked-out by your Lordships protests on the journals of the House, as renders any observations of mine now, and to this end, useless and unnecessary. That the act is contrary to the laws of nature, that it is contrary to religion, that it is contrary to the policy of all governments whatsoever, are such self-evident propositions as require no argument to prove them. To say, that when the fruit is ripe it shall not drop, is vainly to kick against the pricks. Nature will be obeyed, and not even a Spanish padlock can counteract her dictates. *Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurret.* That it is contrary to religion, I appeal to the right reverend Prelates upon the bench, and inasmuch can have no doubt of their giving their support to this bill. St. Paul tells us, "it is better to marry than to burn." If therefore a woman, by the laws of nature, burn at sixteen years of age, and an act of Parliament says, she shall not marry till she is twenty-one, what is the consequence? She either breaks a commandment, and sins; or perhaps by waiting burns out the oil of her lamp, and so dies without fulfilling the end of her creation. Under these circumstances then it is not impossible not to suppose, but that the right reverend prelates will lend their assistance to a bill, which is intended, in conformity with their duty, "*Concubitu prohibere vago*," instead of supporting an act which manifestly encourages and promotes fornication and whoredom in the state.

That this act is contrary to the policy of all governments whatsoever, the proofs are endless and without number. The wealth and strength of a nation are its numbers; to obtain those numbers is not by loose and intemperate pleasures, but by the chaste and more rational medium of the marriage bed; to which the sexes are to be invited by privileges and exemptions, and not deterred by the disabilities and penalties of laws. That it is contrary to the policy of this country in particular is, above all others, true. A country, where freedom is said to reside, where population is to supply the want of territory, and where trade and commerce, the creators of the other two, form the only basis of its political greatness. Where, instead of an act like this, an act, compelling Englishmen to fly to Scotland, to comply with the laws of nature, (the only necessity that could induce an Englishman

Englishman (to fly to Scotland) should expect to find their surest refuge, and their best support. Where, instead of prohibitions, encouragements to population and incitements to marriage, should be the first objects of its laws; where, instead of such an act as this is, one should rather hope to see a law, which whilst it imposes the payment of triple taxes upon the man who beyond a certain age (suppose the age of thirty) lives a single and unmarried life, to the man who is married, holds out the Roman privilege, the Roman right, the *jus trium liberorum*, in exemption from the payment of all taxes whatever. But to do this, my Lords, we must have what is difficult to procure, we must have a statesman and a politician, and not as the Earl of Chatham once said of his brother-in-law, Mr. Grenville, "A thumper of law-books, and a retailer of words." We must have an Earl of Chatham, if an Earl of Chatham can be found; and if not, we must take the man who has wisdom enough to let the example of that great man be the object of his imitation. But, my Lords, I am running into observations, which I have already said, were unnecessary for me to make; and therefore I will only trouble your Lordships with a single remark more, that is rather incidental to this subject from what I have last said, than a topic of argument in it, and it is this: That impolitic and unwise as this act is, I mean the Marriage Act, (for this, I presume, no one will venture to deny, especially after the recent instances that have been afforded your Lordships of its want both of policy and wisdom) it is yet the legitimate offspring of the first and greatest lawyer this kingdom ever had to boast of; a reflection, my Lords, that would be disgraceful to human nature, if another reflection, supported not only by the authority of the Earl of Chatham but by reason and experience, did not confirm the truth of it, and which is this: That of all descriptions of men, (except the clergy, who think of nothing but of their own power,) the lawyers (I mean mere lawyers by profession) are the least qualified for statesmen and politicians. Your Lordships will think this a bold assertion; but it is not therefore less founded on reason and experience: upon reason, for this arises out of the very nature of their profession; a profession that forces their abilities, however great, into all the little, low, narrow, confined personalities of persons and minutiae of things; and in order to manage this with dexterity and success, into that poor left-handed wisdom called artifice and cunning, into

those quirks and quibbles, which, instead of expanding, lessen and contract the human mind. Upon experience, for in the biographical history of all our eminent lawyers (except Bacon and Somers) shew me a lawyer that deserves the name of a statesman; upon experience, for look to the present reign; a reign which, for the whole of it, has the eminent misfortune of being under the guidance of an eminent lawyer: a lawyer who carried us across the Rubicon, who told us to draw our swords and throw away our scabbards; who bid us kill the Americans, or the Americans would kill us; who has made us believe that every common soldier in England, for the purposes of suppressing riots, is a justice of peace.

My Lords, upon the event of these counsels and upon the policy of these measures; let your Lordships experience determine. My Lords, I have done, except to add my resolution to support this bill; and to say, from the counsel of such lawyers, if his majesty will not, may the Lord deliver us! One thing more it may be necessary for me to say, and that is, that I have no apology to make for what I have said. To speak the truth is the privilege of an Englishman; and to do so roundly and plainly is his first and best, and greatest glory!

Lord Chancellor.

The *Lord Chancellor* observed, though their Lordships had not regularly gone into the order of the day, the noble Earl, who took the opportunity of addressing the House, spoke to the question just as if it had been under consideration; but, in his conception, the noble Lord had been premature in his observations, as they seemed much better calculated for a committee, than when the principle of the bill was to be debated on a second reading.

For his own part, he had long made up his mind, but if he had not, the very late period the bill was introduced into that House, would serve him instead of every objection. Indeed the noble Lord himself disapproved of the bill in its present form, nor did he expect to hear a single noble Lord present say, that he could with propriety give his assent to the bill, destitute as it was of that degree of specification, accuracy, and precision, so necessary to bills of such extent and importance, and which of course, must embrace so great a variety of objects.

The noble Earl had suggested several objections against the Marriage-act, passed in the reign of the late king, of which the present bill was designed to be a partial repeal. He could
not

not say that he was prepared to enter into the subject at large, nor would it be then at all proper.

He assured their Lordships, that he heard with great indifference the general censure thrown upon the profession of the law and its professors, nor did the memory of the great lawyer, whose character had been particularly pointed at, require him to stand forth as an advocate to defend it. That great lawyer's character was such as to bid defiance to the attacks of faction, and rose superior to the envy or ill-will of all those who would depreciate it.

Though it might be irregular, he could not help observing, as he was up, that it was very extraordinary indeed, that the present bill, loose and inaccurate as it was, was totally destitute of any plan or principal for effecting the obvious or declared purposes for which it was framed; for it did not even pretend to attempt to remedy any one of the grievances complained of as arising from the marriage act of the late king; on the contrary, the bill proceeded upon a system perfectly new and unprecedented, and in his opinion, would leave the law worse than it found it, in the apprehension of those, who entertained the most unfavourable sentiments of the act as it now stood.

On the whole, he thought it would be extremely improper for the House, to proceed farther in a bill of such infinite importance at so late a period of the session.

A motion was then made, that said bill be read a second time, and on the question put, the Earl of *Abingdon* said *Earl of Abingdon.* "the contents have it," but observing, that almost every Lord present was preparing to go below the bar, his Lordship declined, a division.—The House adjourned to the next day.

July 13.

The other orders of the day being disposed of, it was moved, that the House do resolve itself into a Committee on the Insolvent Debtor's Bill, which called up Earl *Poulett* *Earl Poulett* who addressed the House, to the following effect: *ist.*

My Lords,

Tho' I am not averse to bills of this kind passing at proper times and under proper regulations, yet I have strong objections to such frequent repetitions of them; because they have a tendency to sap and destroy all trust, faith, and confidence between man and man, without which, it is impossible to carry trade to that extent which in a great commercial country, like this, is to be wished. Credit has hitherto run from
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six to eighteen months, according to different commodities, in which respective individuals generally traffic, and a vast advantage and encouragement it is to commerce to have such long credit, but if bills of this sort recur so frequently, where is the manufacturer, who will in future give that long credit, when before the expiration of the time an insolvent bill is almost sure to pass, which absolves the person so intrusted from the payment of all his debts? Trade suffers a paralytic stroke by such bills: my Lords, the bill in its preamble pleads humanity and compassion to induce your Lordships to pass it, words calculated to operate on weak minds, and to assist the sinister purposes of hypocritical ones; but the consequences, give me leave to observe, are totally repugnant to justice, to the law of the land, and all sound policy. When laws, my Lords, lose their permanency, the people soon lose their honesty, which earlier or later must bring certain ruin on any country. Nine parts in ten I will venture to affirm of those now incarcerated in the several jails throughout the kingdom have been brought there by their own idleness, by their own dissipation, by gambling and a total corruption of morals, many of them swindlers, many who have fraudulently got themselves put into jail merely to cheat their creditors, by taking advantage of this act. Ought not then persons under this description to suffer a reasonable time of imprisonment at least, not only as a punishment for the injury they have done to individuals, but to deter others following the like examples. Away then with the cant terms of humanity and compassion, as if as much and more compassion was not due to the honest creditor who earns his bread by the callous hand of labour, as to the profligate debtor who has robbed him of his all by imposing under false pretences on his too easy credulity. The money which the honest creditor has thus lost, would in his hands, probably, if he had not been deluded of it, have been employed to the advantage of the public, whereas it has been squandered by the other to the injury and disgrace of society, and what is still worse and much to be lamented, the unhappy creditor and his whole family in consequence, shall perhaps be forced into that jail from which his profligate creditor is just freed by this bill. But farther, this bill is the greatest discouragement to trade and industry that is possible; for what inducement has any person to be industrious but to make a saving for himself and family? But where is that inducement if he can find no security for the fruits of his labour? Add to this that it is multiplying

multiplying oaths ; it is laying people under the strongest temptations to perjure themselves : It is in some degree making yourselves necessary to fraud. Your Lordships had much better pass a short bill, and decree at once, that no person in future shall be liable to the payment of his debts. Every body will then know what he has to depend upon ; what he has to trust to.. What has any person not over honest now to do to grow rich, but to extend his credit to the utmost, vesting whatever sum he can borrow in Bank bills, or East-India bonds, and at a proper time, by a friendly suit, get himself put into jail, out of which a bill of this kind shortly delivers him, when he may safely laugh at his creditors, having in his own hands the only means of being detected in his fraud ? In a word, the duration of confinement is at present so short that people do not regard it, and are become so abandoned in principle, that they make a trade of taking every advantage of the credulous. Then we complain of the jails being so crowded that there is no room to contain the prisoners ; to what is this owing, but to these bills of insolvency, which every three years they are taught to expect, and are hardy enough a little before the time to solicit imprisonment of some friend, with a view of leaving their creditors in the lurch ? The numbers now in prison, I understand, is the chief reason of this bill being set on foot if so, I most heartily commiserate the pitiful state of this country, which has not more spirit than to suffer itself to be overborne by the vices, the scum of mankind. If it was possible to distinguish such as are or may be truly objects of compassion, who by a train of real and unavoidable misfortunes have lost their liberty, and such who by a bad course of life, and with bad views, have thrown and brought themselves into prison, one should gladly pass such a bill, but as that is impossible, the only thing which can be done in their favour is to reduce their state of confinement to as short a time as you can without injury to the public, and that, I apprehend, cannot be for a less time than three years ; a term, which few debtors would probably chuse to undergo durance of, merely with a view of cheating their creditors. My Lords, bills of this kind formerly were not used to pass but in the beginning of a reign, or once, perhaps, in seven years. Lately they have been reduced to three years ; and I doubt not but that in a little time they will be brought regularly into Parliament annually, like the indemnification-bill, when there will be no longer any credit left in the nation. However, as this bill has already made its progress through the other House, and expectations of its passing have been held out to the debtors, I shall not oppose.

oppose its going into a committee, in hopes it may receive some amendments, which may render it less liable to objections than it is at present.

The House accordingly resolved itself into a Committee, Lord Walsingham in the chair.

Lord Chancellor.

The *Lord Chancellor* observed, that the ground of the bill, if he understood the preamble, stated the reasons for passing such a bill in the usual and ordinary way, which he confessed appeared to him a little extraordinary, as there had been a bill of a similar nature, passed about eighteen months since. By the various laws in being, the creditor was assured of a security, for the property he parted with. He appealed therefore to their Lordships wisdom and justice, whether it would be consonant to either to take away that security from them? If the legislature had determined to repeal those temporary acts of insolvency at shorter or longer periods, it would make every debtor a freeman on the cession of his property, for the benefit of his creditors, and in order to guard such a law from fraud and imposition, to vest a power in the Judges, to determine how far the debtor was or was not intitled to the benefit of the law.

He had heard that there were strong motives for passing the present bill, on which the bill was silent.—What he alluded to was the riots, which happened the preceding year, by which means an infinite number of persons, of almost every description of the lower order had been let loose on the public.—For his part, he could not perceive any necessity, which arose from that circumstance; in his opinion, the present necessity, rather arose from the act hastily passed at the conclusion of that session, but least he should not be able to make himself sufficiently understood, he would advert to some of the circumstances which came before the courts of law, and if his memory should so far fail him, as that he should fall into any error or mistake, he trusted, he should be corrected by the two noble Lords who preside in the Court of King's Bench and Common Pleas, and were now present.

His Lordship then went into a history of the parliamentary proceedings in consequence of the riots, continuing them down to the present moment, and taking a particular view of the two bills that had been brought in respecting prisoners at large in Middlesex and Surrey, sheriffs, jailors, &c. by the attorney-general; the one at the end of the last session, the other at the beginning of this. The first of these bills, he stated, to be the sort of remedy that in the moment, immediately subsequent to the breaking of the prisons, presented

itself to the minds of those under whose direction the bill was drawn. The novelty of the occasion, and the hurry, in which, from the nature of the necessity that called for such a law, the bill was obliged to be drawn, might be certainly taken as the reasons why an oversight should have crept into the bill; the oversight he alluded to, was the enacting, that not only all persons who were in actual custody, at the time of the breaking of the prisons, should, upon surrendering to the marshal or warden of the two great prisons, in which respectively they might have been held, be decined, to be as if they were prisoners, but also that all debtors who should afterwards be arrested, should, upon surrender of bail, be granted a certificate, which should exempt them, and save them harmless not only from their creditor, upon the moment of their being surrendered, but also from all the creditors they might afterwards run in debt with. It was that latitude for fraud and villainy that he considered as the only ground, upon which it could be pretended even that the present bill was necessary. Nor was the oversight confined solely to the first bill, it was to be found also in the second, whence every man, fraudulent enough to wish to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the bill, was invited to practice fraud, cheat the honest trader, and swell the number of prisoners upon the books of the King's Bench and Fleet prisons to the enormous size which it had already attained. Had a clause, enacting that all those persons who were not in custody at the time of the breaking of the prisons, but who were arrested since, should be put into the real situation of a prisoner, been liable to be served with declarations, the actions against them rendered *superfedeable* under certain circumstances, every part of the regular process that went on against prisoners, when in custody, to go against them, and that they should be liable also to arrests on new suits, in his mind all the mischiefs that had happened, would have have been avoided.

His Lordship said, in the second bill, (that brought in this session) there was an infirm clause, but a clause of considerable operation, which in some degree tended to correct the oversight he had complained of; and that was, the clause enacting that prisoners should not be moved from the country by Habeas-corpus to London, to take the benefit of the former act. His Lordship here went into a discussion of the original intention of the issuing a writ of Habeas-corpus, and said all their Lordships, he doubted not, would be at-

nished to find, (that notwithstanding the charm the mere words Habeas-corpus carried with them,) this writ, so far from being intended, as it was generally understood to be, (and as by fictitious process it was rendered) a benefit to the defendant, was designed to be an advantage and security to the plaintiff, who was by statute entitled to sue out a writ of Habeas-corpus, in order to bring up his debtor, when he endeavoured to avoid the issue of a process. At present such was the perversion of practice, that defendants procured a friend to become a fictitious plaintiff, in order to sue out the writ of Habeas-corpus, and to enable them to move themselves where they pleased.

After stating this very fully, his Lordship said, as the preamble held out none of those reasons for passing such a bill, to which he had alluded, he must speak to it as an ordinary temporary bill of insolvency, to which, and to all such, he was eagerly anxious to be understood as a professed enemy, excepting only in cases where the public might be prevented from losing the benefit of the labour of so large a number of persons, when it could be proved, that they were really unfortunate and honest, desiring to do what was right if they had it in their power, and anxious by the sweat of their brow, to do their creditors ample justice. To relieve such persons under certain regulations and restrictions, he should not object; but to temporary acts of insolvency in general he always should object, because he was persuaded they were of the most pernicious consequence, and tended rather to encourage fraud than relieve distress. Instead of the present bill being applicable to the case which was rumoured to be the cause of the bill, and which he understood was the form of the bill when first brought into the other House, it was, as it now stood, an ordinary bill of insolvency, and that of the largest sort of any to be found upon the statute books. But it was said without doo s, the extreme number of the prisoners made it necessary. Would their Lordships, owning such a necessity, pass a temporary bill of insolvency? If they did, the inevitable consequence would be, that the evil now attempted to be cured, would grow into existence again almost immediately after the present was passed; for if the Legislature once acknowledged that a large number of prisoners was a sufficient ground of necessity to render an act of insolvency expedient, new prisoners would crowd into the prisons the instant the present bill was passed, in order to create a necessity for their being white-washed, as was called.

But,

But there was, in fact and in truth, nothing tremendous in the number of 6000 prisoners.

Lord *Mansfield* said, the arguments that their Lordships had just heard were so founded in principles of strict justice and sound policy, that he was very far from rising with an intention to controvert them; the only way in which they could be answered was, by opposing to them a mistaken compassion, which had of late years got such possession of the minds of men, that the edge of the law was frequently turned against the honest and deserving creditor, in order to protect and advantage the fraudulent debtor. With regard to the general reasoning of the learned lord respecting temporary bills of Insolvency, it must be admitted to be perfectly just and undeniably true; the mischiefs resulting from them were justly increasing, and the impolicy as well as the injustice of passing such bills at short intervals was so apparent, that it was wonderful the bulk of mankind had so long shut their eyes to it. In respect to all the noble and learned Lord had said, by way of general reasoning against such bills, his opinion exactly coincided; it had ever led that way, but the torrent was against it, and it was impossible for those, whose minds were under the bias, that he scrupled not to confess his had been, to do more than reserve their sentiments to themselves, and be silent. That the compassion, upon which the friends of such bills as the present had proceeded, was founded in error, was easy to be ascertained by an examination of its fruits. Every act of insolvency, and the variety of bankrupt laws now in existence had proceeded from that mistaken compassion; and it was notorious that there was not a single statute out of all those to which he had referred, that had not been grossly abused, and which, instead of producing good, had not produced a considerable deal of fraud and villainy. The bankrupt laws were, as every body knew, grossly perverted; and instead of serving as a security to the creditor, and a check upon the debtor, operated directly the contrary way. An act of bankruptcy was regarded by the legislature as a crime, and a commission was designed as a punishment; at present the reverse was the case; a commission made a bankrupt's fortune; it was what he wished for; and his friends assisted him in procuring it. Every day proved the increase of frauds under the bankrupt laws, because every day shewed that they were more and more abused; and yet, he knew not how the abuse could be

rectified, because he knew not how a rule could be laid down for separating the wheat from the chaff. So, in cases of insolvent bills, it was extremely difficult to draw them, so as to distinguish the honest and industrious debtors, from the idle and fraudulent. With regard therefore, to the general reasoning against bills of insolvency, he joined most heartily with the noble and learned Lord; but he trusted he should be able to shew, that although bills of insolvency were generally pernicious at present, sound policy dictated, that passing some bill, like the bill then under consideration, would be highly expedient. The noble and learned Lord was a little mistaken in supposing, that the interval between the time of passing the last bill of insolvency, and the bringing in of that before the committee, was only eighteen months, it was three years. A bill was intended last year, but the breaking of the prisons prevented it. The period therefore, between the time of bringing in the last temporary bill of insolvency, and the time of bringing in the present, was longer than any interval of late years between the bringing in of such bills.

When Michaelmas term came, the court of King's-bench found the list upon their Marshal's books enormous; they found also, that the prisons were not repaired nor ready to receive the prisoners. They were puzzled how to act; they did however what they could. They declared that all the debtors, who had fraudulently obtained the certificate, had become cheats to no purpose, so that a fraudulently obtained certificate would be of no avail; and the court had given the prisoners who were brought up from the country, the option of either going to New-prison, or back to the county jail whence they came. New-prison, his Lordship said, was a sufficiently harsh place of confinement in point of accommodation, and those of the country prisoners, who did not accept of that jail, were remanded to the county jail. He added, that when the bill lately passed, was prepared, they had procured the clause, enacting, that no more prisoners should be removed by *Habeas Corpus* to be inserted. That bill was undoubtedly a necessary measure, and he could not but think, that some such bill as the present was at this time expedient.

With so large a number of prisoners on the books, it would be impossible for the courts to open the prisons. Lessen the number, and begin the new custody in a new manner. With a view to this, the court of King's-bench had already made orders,

orders adapted to the purpose. They had in particular made an order, that the wives and children of prisoners should not go into the prisons to lodge; and that for this reason: when the families of poor debtors once got footing in the prisons, there was no getting them out. The prisons afforded them lodging; they found a means of deducing profit from their situation, and they lived better in jail than they ever had lived out of it. In order to prevent this, he had thought it right, when a debtor's action became superfluous, and he might obtain his liberty, to make him go out of prison by force; about eighty prisoners were thus forced out, and he did assure their Lordships, that in many cases, they complained that it was a grievous infringement of the liberty of the subject that they might not be allowed to continue in prison if they chose it. The Court had also ordered the act, forbidding the use of allowing spirituous liquors in prisons, in order to prevent the prisoners from getting intoxicated, to be strictly enforced. Under these new regulations, they hoped prisons would become less desirable places of habitation, and therefore it was designed, that the imprisonment should in future be more rigid; it was wished that the prisoners to go in might be as few as possible.

His Lordship in the course of his speech said, he had frequently met with a cruel debtor, who had used his creditor most hardly, but he had rarely ever known of a cruel creditor, unless upon very great provocation indeed. He also laid some stress on the insolvent bill's having passed the other House unanimously.

Several amendments were nevertheless introduced into the bill, and the Lord Chancellor, after waiting to insert those amendments in their proper place, which were as it was reported, the cause of one hundred and eighty omissions, additions, &c. the bill was ordered to be reported, and the House adjourned to Monday the 16th.

There was no further debate, and the King coming to the House the next day, Tuesday, July 17, was pleased to give the Royal Assent to such bills as were ready, and to give his directions to the Lord Chancellor, to prorogue both Houses of Parliament, agreeably to the accustomed forms, in such cases made and provided.

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